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Rev. Jas. Wilson.

Mr. William Morris

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A Warning-piece FOR THE Slumbring Virgins: OR AN ALARM TO THE Friends of the Bridegroom.

In some awakening Meditations upon Christs own Watch-word, *Mat.*26.41. *Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation,* &c.

The Third Edition.

By *Geo. Scortreth*, Preacher of the Gospel in *Lincoln.*

Rev.16.15. *Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, & keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked,* &c

London, Printed for *Anna Brewster*, at the Golden Bellows in *Fore-street* near *Moor-Lane*, 1669.

Robert Walker his book 1672

Robt Walker his Book
1672

To the Friends, and Followers of the Lamb.

Beloved in our Lord,

I Had not thought to have Printed any of my poor Labours in the Lord; though it has been much upon my heart, they might be imprinted upon the hearts of the Hearers by the Spirit of the living God: But ſome late impulſes have been upon my ſpirit (ſince infirmities have grown upon me) to

leave a few words with the Servants of Christ before I leave them; looking up to him, to leave his blessing with them; and that upon these and the like Considerations: 1. The strange slumbrings of so many backsliding Christians at this day, have somewhat awakened my drowsie spirit; and my eye hath affected my heart, to see so many sleepy eyes, and heavy hearts; so that I am not at rest, till I have eased my own soul in warning them openly, as in weeping for them in secret. 2. The

Lord

Lord hath been following me with awakening dispensations; Morning by morning awakening my ear to receive instruction: and while he haeh shaken his Rod of fatherly Correction over me, a deep Conviction hath fallen from Heaven upon me, that it is the work of the day in its day, for the Watchmen to cry aloud, saying, *Awake, Awake.* 3. I have some sweet perswasions through mercy, that whiles I am at the Lords Work, stirring up others to watch and pray, I shall find him at work within,

ſtirring me up to take hold of him; and giving in ſome awakening heart-reflections upon theſe Meditations of Watchfulneſs; and my heart tells me, the Watchmen of all others would be well awakened, and ever upon their Watch at ſuch a day as this. 4. Pity to ſlumbring Saints, who hear not the ſounding of their own bowels to make them pity themſelves, hath moved me to knock at their doors, and ask them how they do at heart; They little think (alas) now their hearts are aſleep, of the

the sorrows that are coming upon the Men and Women that are at ease in *Zion*, as sorrow upon a Woman in Travel. 5. The love of Christ constrains me to call upon his slothful Servants to arise and fal to their Masters work; who hath most to do i'th last dayes, and would not be left alone at it: many heads, hands, and hearts busie together, would make light work: 'twould go merrily on, and not so heavily as now it does, whiles so many heads and hearts are heavy with sleep. 6. The stirring

Appetites of some hungry craving ones (indeared to me in the bonds of the Gospel) who are daily waiting with longing for one cluster of Grapes or other, from the Celestial *Canaan*, have made me the more willing to press this one Grape for their sakes: happily they may find a little sweetness in it, (though none else should) as taking and tasting it with a good will, from his hand, whose heart is towards them. And if any of these should unhappily be overtaken with that dead sleep of mid-

midnight-ſecurity, which hath ſurprized ſo many at this day; who knows but the importunities of one that is their Friend, may prevail with them, to riſe and open the door of their hearts, when the *Bridegroom* himſelf ſhall knock, who is their beſt and deareſt Friend i'th World.

Theſe being the *Wheels* which hath ſet this *Watch* on motion, you may not expect any eye or ear-affecting curioſity, but heart-awakening Goſpel Simplicity; the entiſing words of mans wiſdom have lull'd many aſleep: and

and it must be plainness of speech in the demonstration of the *Spirit*, that must awaken them. I have most to do in this Work with *Wisdoms Children*, who have *learnt* to become *fools*, that they may be *wise*, and had rather hear one word spoken to the *understanding*, then a thousand words in an unknown Tongue.

The corporal *weaknesses* and spiritual *wants* of one groaning under an heap of *infirmities*, will make a sufficient Apology for all *wants* and *weaknesses*, as to matter or method: 'Tis broken meat, this, for broken

ken hearts, who will be gathering up a few *Crums* here and there; and if it be well digeſted within, it will be the leſs matter, though it be ſo indigeſted without.

I am very ſenſible, 'tis ſowen in great weakneſs, (alas, how can ſo poor a nothing Creature do otherwiſe!) yet I am not out of *heart* or *hopes*, through grace, but it may riſe up in power, to the raiſing up of ſome that are aſleep in ſin, and the rouſing up of others that are under a ſinful ſlumber, by the *power* of the *Spirit*; which is his

hearts

hearts design and desire, who would willingly be-speak your heart-remembrances, while he takes the humble boldness to be one of your weak (though willing) *Remembrancers* in the Name of the Lord, that he may be accounted worthy to be found a watchful Servant of *Christ Jesus* our *Lord*, and

Your faithful Servant for Jesus sake,

G. S.

From my Chamber in little Queen-street, *London*, M. 7. 1656.

To my well-beloved Friends, endeared to me in the Love and Bonds of the Gospel, at Lincoln, *or elsewhere.*

Dear Friends,

BEing laid aside by the Hand of my Righteous Father, as to the publick Work of the Ministry amongst you; you have been much upon my heart, in my private Meditations, to stir you up and put you in remembrance to wait upon our Lord, & for him, who will meet those with rejoycing, that remember him in his wayes. *Isa. 64. 5.* The openings of your hearts to me in much affection and compassion, as many of your eyes witnessed at our parting, (not knowing whether we should see the faces of one another any more)

more) and as your affectionate remembrances of me, while absent, and under present bodily pressures, do suficiently testifie, have much bespoke my heart on your behalf to leave this Watch-word with you, if I should now take my rest and sleep in Jesus. And if the Father of Mercies should graciously raise me up by his strength, to spend & be spent amongst you, 'twould be a sweet mercy, to find you in a waiting watching posture: 'Twill be the more seasonable to *knock* where they are awakened, and to strike while the Iron's hot; The Word of Life will be most welcome to quickned spirits.

That you may read these following awakening Meditations, with open eyes and hearts, let me present you with a few preparatory hints, to an awakened posture; happily your sight may

be a little cleared by this foretaſte (as *Jonathans* was upon his taſting a little Honey from the end of his Rod) if you look up for eye-ſalve from Heaven, while you are looking on them.

And firſt, by way of Counſel. 1. Hearken as with both Ears to the glad-tydings of the Goſpel; you'l find, that good reports from Jeſus Chriſt, under Evangelical Diſpenſations, will exceedingly affect, and effectually awaken your hearts. The ſweetneſs of the bunch of *grapes* upon that ſtaff of beauty, feelingly taſted, will ſet you a longing after the choice Fruits of the Heavenly *Canaan*; and hungry ſouls will not eaſily ſleep over their ſpiritual Food. 2. Walk up to Light received in the love and power of it; you'l find it a good thing indeed to behold the pure heart-quickning beams

of

of the Sun of Righteouſneſs: Its Soul-taking too; 'Twill follow you, as you follow it; Then ſhall
Hoſ.6.3. you know, if you follow on to know the Lord his goings forth will be prepared as the morning, ſhining upon you, & within you, and cauſing your Path to ſhine more & more to the perfect day: And you will find this Sun-ſhine marvellouſly clearing & quickning the eyes of your underſtanding. 3. Knock oft at your own doors, you may be bold at home, and ask every day, How all does within; what ſtrength of faith; what warmth of love; what growth in grace, *&c.* Much Soul-ſearching, will very much prevent Soul-ſlumbring: Communing with Conſcience will keep it awake, and it will cry loud in your ears to keep you awake. 4. Stir up one another, and that with importunity, to

ſtir

ſtir up the Grace of Chriſt that is in you, to do good to all, &c. and all the good you can; and to do what you find in your hands to do for God, with all your might, and that while you have opportunity; for there is no work i'th Grave, whither we are going. 'Twill be one of the beſt deeds of pure charity at this day, to viſit crazy ſick ſouls, that lie languiſhing and ſlumbring under ſpiritual Conſumptions, in the Name of the Lord; and to propound heart-ſearching Queſtions to quicken them, inſtead of heart-ſeparating Queries, which have deaden'd them. And ſure it would be a very ſeaſonable work in this hour of temptation, amongſt Chriſtian friends, (at diſtance) to take up that Primitive Practice of the bleſſed Servants and Martyrs of Jeſus, by quickening up one an-

Eccleſ. 9. 10.

others ſpirits with heart-awakening Letters. I cannot but commend this labour of Love to ſuch as are preſent with one another in ſpirit and love, when abſent in body, as that which ſome in our dayes have found a ſweet bleſſing in, even as in that cluſter mentioned, *Iſa.* 65. 8. 5. Give all diligence in the frequent and fervent performance of all Goſpel-duties with a Goſpel-ſpirit, ſetting grace on work in all by the ſupply of the Spirit; and if you find your hearts ready to follow the Lord fully in all the work he has cut up for you, you'l find work enough ready at your hands and hearts to keep you awake. 6. Caſt up your ſpiritual accounts every day, with an eye to that great Day, when every one muſt give an account of himſelf to the Judge of Quick and Dead; oft

Soul-

Soul reckonings will rowſe up your ſpirits much, to wait for the Bridegroom with loyns girt, and lamps burning, as if you heard the cry at midnight. *Mat.25.*

Secondly, By way of *Caution.* 1. Take heed of an heavy Ear under the Sound of the Goſpel, leſt your ears ſhould tingle for it another day. The Seers eyes muſt needs weep in ſecret for you, if they behold you ſleeping openly under the Lords all-ſeeing eye; 'Twill ſadden the hearts of weak Chriſtians to ſee you heavy-hearted under that Goſpel of Grace, by which they and you have been often awakened; and carnal hearts will be the more apt to ſlight that ſpiritual food which they ſee you ſleep over. 2. Take heed of reſting in a form of Godlineſs, without power, of taking up with the Letter, without the Spi-

rit; or being contented with a Name to live, without that new Name, and a new Heart and Life: You may lie dead at the Letter, till you die, but the Spirit will quicken you, and put life into your ſpirit; You may eaſily ſlumber under the form of an outvvard profeſſion, but the conſtant exerciſe of the povver of godlineſs vvill effectually avvaken you. 3. Dally not vvith any beloved luſt, nor be dandled upon any *Dalilahs* Lap, leſt you fall aſleep upon it, and be betrayed; If your hearts go after any ſtrange Lovers, you muſt needs loſe your firſt love to your firſt Husband, and be left heartleſſe and ſpiritleſſe; if you indulge any right Eye, or right Hand, hovv dark vvill the right Eye be? and hovv dead the right Hand of your inward Man? you muſt vvatch over your ovvn iniquity,

quity, yea, over every ſin, as ever you would be found watchful at God's Word, or chearful in his way. Senſuality in any kind will breed ſpiritual ſecurity at firſt, and bring perplexity of ſpirit at laſt. Sin's calm muſt needs end in a ſad ſtorm. 4. Take heed of ſelf-ſeeking, and ſeeking great things to your ſelves. A ſelfiſh ſpirit will be ſluggiſh in ſpirituals; if you once begin to take your fill of creature-comforts, you'l have no ſtomack to the things of Chriſt, but even ſleep at his Breaſt: The love of the World will eat out your love to God, his Word, his Work, his People, &c. If you be all upon't, riſing early to eat the bread of ſorrows, you'l loſe that ſweet ſleep he gives his Beloved, and be caſt into a falſe ſlumber, feeding your ſelves with fooliſh fancies, ſaying, *Soul, take thine eaſe;* *Pſal.* 127 2.

where little eaſe is to be found: when the heart is drunk with the ſtrong Wine of the Worlds Cup, or drowned in the ſweet Waters of its own Ciſtern, 'twill certainly fall into a dead ſleep; and Chriſtians overloaden with thick Clay, we ſee with ſorrow how heavily they drive. 5. Take heed of ſlighting any holy Duties, and of a ſlight frame of ſpirit in them. 'Tis a ſlighting of God himſelf, who will lightly eſteem ſuch, and leave them to their own ſlothful ſpirits. A ſluggiſh indiſpoſition will ever attend ſinful omiſſions; and ſuch as dare be bold in the omitting of good, are in danger to become baſe and vile in the committing of evill: If your hearts back-ſlide in ſecret from humble communion with God in his holy wayes, he will turn his back upon you, and leave you

to

to eat the fruit of your own wayes; and then, alas, how weak will your hearts be, in, and to, any thing that's good? how wofully evil? 6. Take heed of grieving the good Spirit of God; leſt he go away ſadly, and leave you to the heavineſs of your own ſpirits. Oh, if you quench the Heavenly ſparks of his holy motions, the fire of your love and zeal will quickly be going out, & you'l grow cold at heart. Oh do not, do not tempt the Holy Ghoſt, no not for a world, leſt he withdraw his Light, Life, Power, and Peace from you; and then how dark and dead, heartleſs and helpleſs will you lie in this hour of Temptation?

Theſe are the broken thoughts of one of your poor heart-friends, when afflicted and abſent in body, yet affected, as preſent in ſpirit, with the ſenſe

of the room he hath had in your hearts, while the Hand of the Lord hath touched him; What in mercy he hath brought to my hand and heart, (while I had only his own Book with me) I leave to the bleſſing of his own hand, upon your hearts and mind.

Now the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for of Chriſt. And I beſeech you Brethren for his ſake, and the love of the Spirit, that you ſtrive together and aſunder in your prayers to God for me, that he would conſider my troubles, and knovv my Soul in adverſity, that I may rejoyce in his mercy; and that I may come unto you vvith joy by the Will of God, and may vvith you be refreſhed, through the gracious preſence of Chriſt, to the praiſe of his Grace, to

vvhoſe

vvhoſe benediction, direction, and dominion, I humbly commit you, and reſt,

Your much obliged Friend

and Servant in the

Goſpel of Chriſt,

G. S.

Chriſtian

Chriſtian Reader,

AS 'tis the ſpecial Office of ſome men to be Watchmen, ſo 'tis the common duty of all men to Watch. That ſome men are appointed to vvatch over others, cannot excuſe any mans neglect of vvatching over Himſelf. All the Ports of the Body, the Eyes, the Ears, the Lips, (at vvhich the Soul is continually iſſuing out by ſeveral acts, or taking in from ſeveral Objects) need a continual vvatch upon them; hovv much more doth that moſt important Piece of all, the Heart? We ſhould alvvayes vvatch vvhat God is doing, vve ſhould vvatch vvhat God is ſpeaking, vvhat he ſpeaks

to

to us in his Word, what he ſpeaks to us in his Works; We ſhould watch what he ſpeaks to move us unto Prayer, and what he ſpeaks in anſwer to the motions which we have made in Prayer. How watchful ſhould they be, who have all theſe, and many more, occaſions of watching? We read in *Daniel*, (Chap. 4. 13.) *Of a Watcher, and a Holy one that came down from Heaven;* And ſurely none on Earth can be *Holy Ones, unleſs they be Watchers.* The careleſs Soul is alwayes a corrupt one; and ſecurity layeth us open to all impurity. Satan watcheth to make us Halt, and evil men watch for our Haltings; We ſhall never take either even or clean ſteps, unleſs we watch our own goings, and ponder the path of our feet: Watchfulneſs being ſo indiſpenſable a Duty,

how

hovv glad ſhould vve be of any thing either to avvaken us, or keep us avvake? The Learned and Godly Author of this enſuing Diſcourſe, hath *beaten ſuch an Alarm, and ſhot off ſuch a Warning-Piece in our Quarters*, that if the Virgins ſlumber ſtill, as their ſecurity vvill be inexcuſable, ſo their calamity vvill be unavoidable. What can they look for, vvho vvill not vvatch to pray, But that *God* (as he once did, *Jer.* 31.28.) *ſhould watch over them to pluck up, and to break down, and to deſtroy, and to afflict*; What can they look for, vvho vvill not vvatch to do good, but that, *God*, (as another Prophet ſaith he once did, *Dan.* 4. 13.) *ſhould watch upon the evil, and bring it upon them?* They vvho vvill not take vvarning, deſerve to be made one. Having peruſed this Manual of Watchfulneſs,

neſs, I commend it into the hands and to the hearts of all thoſe, vvho vvould find peace, and be found in peace, vvhen their Lord cometh. It vvas ſad, that the Diſciples eyes vvere ſo heavy, that they could not vvatch vvith Chriſt one hour, vvhen he vvas going out of the World. And it vvill be more ſad vvith thoſe, vvhoſe hearts are ſo heavy, that they cannot vvatch for the return of Chriſt at all hours: vvho therefore hath not told us, the particular hour of his coming, that vve at all hours might be kept vvatching for it. And Bleſſed vvill thoſe Servants be, vvhom vvhen their Lord cometh, he ſhall find vvatching and praying, or vvatching unto prayer, that they enter not into temptation, and that they may be kept in the hour of temptation.

Reader,

Reader, That this Book may be bleſſed from Above to make thee Watchful, is his Prayer, who readily approves it for the Preſs, and publick Uſe of this Slumbring Age,

Joſeph Caryl.

To

To the Reader.

READER,

THey who keep close to the Lord Christ in Holiness of Life, and purity of Doctrine, are Virgins, whether particular Persons, or Churches: Such being expos'd to many temptations, and subject to much Slumbring, here is a Warning-Piece for them. The great Watchman of Israel warn'd his Apostles, yea all to Watch: So doth this good Watchman in Israel. Watching is a Duty of grand importance. Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and other Worthies were tempted, slumbred, and suffered much for want of Watchfulness. When Kings slumber, they may lose a Skirt of their Garments; and when Virgins slumber, they may lose

Mark 13 37.

1 Sam. 24. 13.

lose their whole Garments, all their
Rev. 16. *Ornaments and the shame of their*
15. *nakedness appear. The vigilant Author hath prepared and fitted this Treatise to prevent such evils: Its little, but of much worth, being Judicious, Succinct, and Spiritual. Bulkie Volumn, must give place. Its full of Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver, choice Truths in choice expressions. Reader, wouldst thou be a wise, watchful, and experimental Christian, look seriously into this* Treatise, *lay the Contents of it close to thy heart, and be sure to have thy desire.*

William Greenhill,

Geo. Griffiths.

A

A WARNING-PIECE FOR THE Slumbring-Virgins.

MATTH. 26. 41.

Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

IN the 37th Verse of this Chapter, we find, Jesus took *Peter*, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, *and he began to be sorrowful*, &c. They that had seen his glory in the Mount, when Mat. 17. 1, 2.

his Countenance shined as the Sun, &c. must now see him under a Cloud, his glory vailed; they beheld him in his Tryumph, and must see him in his trouble. 'Tis Christs familiar way to be before-hand with his suffering Servants, to give them some hearty draughts of the Cup of Consolation, before he put into their hands the Cup of *trembling*. And 'tis a sweet heart-taking method, well-becoming our tender-hearted Physician, who loves to be preventing his poor ones with tender mercies, so preparing them for suf-
Vers. 38. ferings for him, by declaring his loveliness and love to them.

In the 40*th* Verse: Christ finds his Disciples asleep, when he had newly called upon them to watch, (so apt are we to sleep under awakening teachings) when he was heavy and sorrowful even to the death, how heavy were their eyes? how heartless they at such a time, even as dead men? they can-
Vers. 40. not watch with him, or for him, when his enemies were watching to take him. Ah poor helpless, Spiritless friend to him, who had so befriended them

H

His own Disciples have least care to watch, when greatest cause to watch; now was their time if ever to watch, when he so awakened, and now they let their watch fall; What, not watch with me one hour? Is it come to this? No better Souldiers under so good a Captain? What, deal so ill with me, who have dealt so well with you? Yea, not watch with me one hour, who have watched so long over you for good? And now the hour is come too? If not for me, yet for your selves; *for when the Shepherd is smitten, the Sheep will be scattered?* But no warning will keep them awake when the heart's asleep; He comes once, and again, yea the third time, and finds them sleeping, (thus the sleepie evil grows upon us) we are usually most secure, when least safe, and heaviest with sleep, under heaviest awakening providences.

In the Text, we have Christ's faithful Watch-word, or friendly Alarm to his slumbring Disciples; where observe.

1. A double Duty commanded.
2. A double Reason commended.

1. A double Duty commanded, *Watch and Pray*; an excellent present remedy against spiritual security. A word in season; an happy conjunction, a blessed pair joyned together by Christ himself, let no man put them asunder: Watching without Prayer will be helpless; and Prayer without Watching will be heartless; but both together, heartful and helpful: Prayer without watching will never awake us, and watching without prayer will never awaken the Lord to watch over us for good; but both together will bring in many awakening, quickning and comforting visits betwixt God and our Souls: Watching in prayer makes it a good watch, and prayer in watching makes all things work for good.

2. A double Reason commended, *Lest ye enter into temptation. The Spirit indeed, &c.*

1. Ye are exposed to temptation.

2. Ye

2. Ye are indispoſed to oppoſition.

1. Ye are expoſed to temptation, if you do not watch and pray, you tempt the Lord to lead you into temptation, and leave you there; you tempt the tempter to tempt you; if you do not watch and pray, he'l watch to make a prey of you; And you tempt your ſelves, you lie neareſt to and faireſt for temptations, when you are fartheſt from watchful ſupplication. 1. You cloſe with temptations, you are in the midſt of them before you be aware; if you watch not to ſhut the door againſt them, you open the door to them, there will be temptations upon you within and without, and you will be within them; while you lie ſleepy and prayerleſs upon a bed of eaſe, you even lay a Cuſhion for Satan to lie down by you; you enter into temptation, and temptations will enter into you. 2. Temptations will encloſe you, you'l not know how to get out, when once in; you are in danger to be loſt in the croud; you may be eaſily entangled, but not ſo eaſily enlarged;

'tis hard getting out of the Devils Labyrinth.

2. Ye are indispos'd to opposition; the flesh is weak, and your temptations strong; here observe,

1. Christs candid Concession; *the Spirit*, &c.

2. His clear Conviction; *the Flesh*, &c.

1. His Concession; *the Spirit is willing*; your heart is good, though your hand be short; there is sincerity in you, though you want ability; Christ cannot find in his heart to break the bruised Reed, the broken heart; he owns their willingness with a good will, though much weakness in them. It may do one good at heart to see how his heart was upon their hearts, when their heads were heavy; how sweetly his Spirit sympathizeth with their Spirits; 'tis like himself; *the Spirit is willing*, saith he.

2. His Conviction; *the Flesh is weak*; Christ is willing to overlook their infirmities, but will have them look upon them; they must not indulge themselves, for his indulgence

towards them; Here's Counſel implyed, to take care of their Spirits, that they may be quickned, cheriſhed, and ſtrengthened by his Spirit, who helps to will and to do of his good pleaſure; that to wil may be preſent with them, and to perform too.

And here's Caution intimated, to take heed to the fleſh, to keep them humble, and ſenſible of their weakneſs, that he might perfect his ſtrength in weakneſs.

I ſhall ſum up all under this one word, and 'tis Chriſt's own; *Watch.* Oh that he would own it, and follow it home to our hearts by his Spirit, that we may own it for his ſake.

Obſ. *'Tis an Evangelical Duty to Watch.*

This is Wiſdoms own Counſel, and muſt be her Childrens care; The Captain of our Salvation, gives this word to his Souldiers, to awaken them to work out their Salvation, *&c.* Now Souldiers upon pain of death, muſt be at a word of command: The watchful Shepherd of Souls calls upon his

Sheep to watch, and his Voice they moſt hear; How oft is this Hammer lift up, to knock at the everlaſting doors of our hearts, even by the King of Glory himſelf? Ten times at the leaſt, we have this word expreſſed by the Evangeliſts, from Chriſts own Mouth: How apt are we to ſleep on both ears, that he muſt cry ſo hard, and call ſo oft upon us, ſaying, Watch, watch, watch, &c. How hardly are we awakened? What a dead ſleep is upon us, that there muſt be ſuch crying, jogging, knocking, &c? How dangerous is carnal ſecurity, that Chriſt ſhould ſo importunately warn us, and affectionately watch over us, as to this ſpiritual duty of watching; there muſt needs be much in it, when he is ſo much upon it; and ſure, watching well, will tend greatly to our beſt welfare and happineſs, ſeeing our good Lord and Maſter makes it ſo much our buſineſs.

But what is this Goſpel Duty of Watching?

Firſt, in general; 'tis a buſie work, and much goes to the doing of it in a Goſpel

Goſpel way: This one work well underſtood will find us all work enough; The word is borrowed from the practiſe of Shepherds watching over their Flocks, as *Jacob* over *Labans*; or from Souldiers upon the Guard, who keep ſtrict watch; both theſe muſt diſcharge their truſt with great diligence and patience; ſpecial care and conſtancy; they muſt endure the heat by day, and the cold by night; Chriſt's experienced Souldiers do find, 'tis hard duty, this; much muſt be done and ſuffered upon this account, there's no giving over this watch, what ever it coſts us, our life lies on't.

This ſpiritual watch preſuppoſes an awakened heart out of *Natural Stupidity*, and *Formal Security*.

1. Out of natural, carnal ſtupidity; they cannot poſſibly watch, who were never awakened; the natural man is ſpiritually dead, and as uncapable of this ſpiritual duty, as a man born blind is to ſee the Sun, or a dead man to hear the Thunder; he muſt firſt hear the Voice of the Son of God, ſaying, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, &c.

before

before he can watch with him or for him: alas, how can they watch, who have eyes and see not? (like the Idols in the Psalm). He must be a spiritual man, that discerns spiritual things, that is fit to be a spiritual Watch-man, and to wait in the spirit.

2. Out of formal security; A sleepy professor is ever crying, a little sleep, a little slumber, &c. he cannot keep his heart awake if he might have all the World, nor his eyes open; sluggish slumbring Christians are in no posture for watching, they are as silly Doves without an heart; they have no heart to this heart-duty, and no heart in it; they are not spirited for this work; their spiritual senses are bound up, they have let their watch fall, and will never take it up again without a sound awakening. The watchmen must cry aloud in the ears and consciences of such, or they'l lie down to sleep again and again; swooning Christians can never watch till the Lord rub them up to purpose; they had need be living and lively men, that are to watch as for life; it must be a raised sinner, and

rowſed Saint, that's ſet about this work.

Secondly, More particularly, Evangelical watching implies theſe things following.

1. Attention; a ſpiritual watchman muſt have his ear awakened morning by morning, (as the Prophet's) that he may hear what the Spirit ſaith; this the Spirit calls for over and over, *Let him that hath an ear, hear*, &c. he muſt have an hearing and harkening ear too, that would hear the ſtill Voice, the whiſperings of the holy Spirit; he muſt have an ear to hear from God that keeps his watch, or he will have no eye to ſee him, no mouth to ſpeak from him or for him; God has much to ſay to his awakened ones, that are upon his watch, they had need have their ears about them, yea within them; An heavy ear, and a ſleepy heart go together; to whom ſhall we ſpeak and give warning (ſayes *Jeremy* ſadly) they have uncircumciſed ears, *&c.* and cannot hear; Alas, the ſpeakers muſt ſhut up their mouths there, where the people ſtop their ears

Iſa. 50. 4.

Rev. 2. & 3.

Jer. 6. 10.

Mat. 13. 15.

ears; they are no hearers indeed, who have ears and hear not. And may we not take up that heavy complaint at this day (one of the saddest in all the Book of God) They have made their hearts and ears heavy, lest they should hear with their ears, &c. Who so deaf as many of Gods Servants, (to borrow that expression) much preaching (as great sounds) hath made many deaf, that what they would not hear, they cannot; And what are the wisest charmings to such deaf Adders? Well, Christs watchmen must be swift to hear, for his motions are quick; he's sometimes, but a word and away; a knock, and he has done.

Isa. 42. 19.

2. *Intention.* A watchman must be very intent upon his duty; corporal watching, much more spiritual, should take up our Spirits; God must be much heeded, and his whole work well minded, even with the whole heart, especially this work of watching; He's no Servant for Christ, that would serve him by halves; there's no being for him almost, but altogether, or not at all.

all: All our ſpiritual forces muſt be muſtred up, to keep this watch; we muſt ſtir up all our ſtrength, and all too little in the diſcharge of this duty; it will take up the whole man; there is no halting here, leſt evil overtake us: A lame Chriſtian will never ſtand to it, but muſt be ſitting down ever and anon. He had need be a man of another Spirit (*Caleb-like*) that would follow the Lord fully in this Spiritual watch. As natural things act to the uttermoſt, within their Sphear; ſo in this ſupernatural work of Evangelical watching, we ſhould act all we can for God, within the Sphear of our Spiritual activity; what ever we find in our hands to do for him (eſpecially it ſo weighty and buſie a work as this) we ſhould do it with all our might: There muſt be an holy violence and fervency, accompanying Goſpel vigilancy; Spiritual force will do well here, indeed we can never watch well without it; If it once come to a ſpirit of indifferency, it will not be long, ere we be ſurprized by a ſpirit of ſecurity: If we care not much (*Gallio-*

Eccleſ. 9. 10.

like)

like) we shall watch but little; a slothful spirit will be sleepy, do what you can. Oh what sad slumbrings amongst us, since Christians have laid themselves down upon beds of ease! a lazie creature is never likely to watch with Christ, or for him. He's nimble as a Roe, quick in his turns; No, you must stir up your selves in Christs strength, to qurr your selves like men in his service.

3. *Inspection.* Christs Watchmen must be all Seers, and have seeing eyes as well as hearing ears: Our Spiritual watch lies most within, 'tis an inward watch especially: Our eyes must be in our hearts, and upon them; 'Tis a very considerable watch word that Prov. 4. 2. 3 Above all keeping keep thy heart; a strong and strict guard must be kept there; and indeed if the watch be not kept strictly there, all our watching will be in vain; 'Twill be to little purpose to set a watch before our mouths, or make a covenant with our eyes; if the plague of the heart be not watched over, it will be ever breaking forth into Jer. 17. 9. to putrified sores. Had we an hun-

dre

dred eyes, they had need be all at watch here, for our hearts are deceitful above meaſure; who can know them? And he that is not faithful in inward watching, will never be good for ought, either as to outward waiting on God, or watching over others. How many have been looking ſo much abroad, that they are to ſeek at home? watching the haltings of others, but not their own; buſie-bodies in others matters, and neglecting the buſineſs of their own ſpirits; they are eſpying motes in the eyes of others, and lay up their eyes at home, or ſee not the beams in them. How oft does the Spirit knock at their doors, and they not within? When he comes to deal with their hearts, they are not to be found; 'Twas ſaid of old, *Fools will be meddling*; that is, with others, not themſelves: Oh, how many ſuch fools are everywhere, whoſe eyes are in the corners of the Earth, ſeldom in the corners of their own hearts; moſt buſie where they have leaſt to do, and leaſt where moſt: Will not the Lord ere long, ſearch ſuch as with Candles, who put

out their lights within, that they may not see themselves? Will he not storm them home, that scatter their wayes abroad? Will not the Judge (think you) be at their doors, who are all for judging others, but not themselves? Well, the Lord is about to find the heavy-headed and hearted Virgins work within their own doors, and to set them upon heart-watching again by some awakening dispensations; Oh 'tis one chief business in our spiritual watch, to try our own spirits; and much communing with our selves will keep our hearts awake; and indeed since the Servants of Christ have idled it within, and neglected this inward work of heart-searching, they have left their first works and watchings.

4. Circumspection; In this spiritual watch, as we should have our eyes in our hearts, so in our heads; as to look within, so without; As the Dove casts her head about this way and that before she take her flight; So should Christ's Doves look above them and about them, yea every way, before they move any way; As the head

muſt be vvatched over, above all vvatchings; ſo there muſt be a vvatch over the mouth, (as over *Davids*); over the eye, (as over *Jobs*); yea, over the whole man, and the whole life. As we ſhould be ever upon our Watch-Tower, to vvatch at all times (being a vvork alwayes in ſeaſon) ſo to vvatch over all things; and to take a view alwayes, above and below, at the right-hand and the left; that we be not ſurprized any where, in any thing, at any time; As the Virtuous Woman whoſe price is above Rubies, is ſaid to *look well into the wayes of her houſhold*; So muſt the Gracious Watch-man do, he muſt be a Seer, an Over-ſeer to his own houſe: And as the children of *Iſſacar* are ſaid to have underſtanding of the times, and to know vvhat *Iſrael* had to do; So ſhould the generation of Spiritual Watchers, have an eye upon Generation-vvork, an heart to it, an hand in it, ſerving their own Generation (as *David* did) till they fall aſleep: The Spirituall Watch-man ſhould have a diſcerning into all things; not be Eagle-ey'd onely in

Prov. 31. 10, 27.

1 *Chron.* 12. 32.

Acts 13. 36.

some things, and blind as Bats in other things; but as the four Beasts, which were full of eyes within, and full of eyes before and behind too; So should they that are upon the Lord's Watch, be full of eyes within and without. Alas poor silly creatures that we be, we meet with a snare in every creature; temptations will be crouding upon us in every condition, we are in danger on all hands, to be defiled, or deceived; and therefore we had need watch at every turn, and have our eyes turning every way (as the flaming sword at the East of the Garden of *Eden*). As the Lord (who is all eye as it were) watches us all over; over all our thoughts, all our words, all our wayes, &c; So should we watch over our selves, even all over at all times; our goings out and comings in, our down-sitting and uprising; we should beset our selves with a strict Watch behind and before.

Rev. 4. 6.

Psal. 139.

5. *Exercitation.* There is much work in this Watch, it is a very busie imployment, full of duty, a duty in every duty; we should watch at every work

work; a ſlothful Servant is not fit for this ſtirring ſervice, this is no work for lazy-bodies; It's not carried on by ſitting ſtill, or looking about us; 'Tis lively work, and requires a living, active, quickned Spirit; Grace in the habit is not ſufficient (though in the higheſt and greateſt meaſure) to keep on foot this ſpiritual Watch, no not in the leaſt and loweſt work of it; when Grace is not at work, there's no watch kept, it lies ſleeping in the ſoul, and the ſoul's aſleep too; when bodily exerciſe is laid aſide, and there's a ceſſation from motion and action, we find great propenſity to ſlumbring and heavineſs. 'Tis even ſo in ſpirituals, when the acts and exerciſes of Grace are ſuſpended, we are eaſily overtaken with the ſpirit of ſlumber. Since Profeſſors have been idle, and lived at eaſe in *Zion*, what a ſtrange ſpirit of formal ſecurity, and ſluggiſh ſecure formality has ſtolen upon them, and ſtolen away their hearts too? 'Tis ſad, very ſad to ſee how the Virgins are fallen aſleep ſince they have been all for eaſie work; careleſs ones have let their Watch fall;

they find themſelves little to do in ſpirituals, and ſleep much in ſpirit; and as they give over vvorking, ſo they give over vvatching; as they ceaſe from duty, they are ſeazed upon by ſecurity. Graces muſt be exerciſed, and Habits actuated, by the help of the Spirit of Grace, that our ſpiritual Watch may be mannaged and maintained. Buſie heads and hearts are moſt vvatchful; if we ſtir up the Grace of Chriſt in us, it vvill ſtir us up to vvatch vvith Chriſt, and for him. As appears plainly in new Converts, vvho are much vvrought upon, and work much; they are full of ſpiritual Struglings, Wreſtlings; Searchings, Pantings, Groanings, Sighings, *&c.* Oh hovv vvatchful are theſe new creatures vvhen new awakened? Chriſt's Babes are not like other Babes, in this; for they ſleep leaſt when new born, and others moſt; Hovv vvatchful in Prayer, and vvatching unto Prayer? Their eyes even failing with looking up; vvatchful in meditation, their hearts are ever bubling up like a quick ſpring; watchful in hearing the good Word of God, to hear a

Pſal. 45.

good

good Word from God; how do they hang about Chriſts Lips (as it were) with both ears, for ſome drops of ſweet ſmelling Myrrh; how watchful to enjoy communion with the Father, amongſt his Children; how much upon the Wing after the Doves of Chriſt? no company now, like the Companions of Chriſt, that hear his Voice. Now it is far otherwiſe with many ancient Chriſtians, who having unbent their Bow of holy Purpoſes and Practiſes, (which at firſt ſeemed to abide in ſtrength like *Joſephs*) grow remiſs in Goſpel-duties, take their hands off from Chriſt's Plow, and look back, grow looſe in Spirit, loſe time, let their Talents lie ruſting by them, and their Graces reſting in them; How ſuddenly and ſhamefully their Watch falls, as their Work fails? The longer they live, the leſs life in their ſpirits and ſervice, and all things are ready to die in them before they die: How heavily they drive, when they once give over oyling their Wheeles with ſpiritual exerciſes. *Gen.* 49.

'Tis an high, hard, great Work to watch after a ſpiritual manner; they that are upon this Work in good earneſt, find a great deal of good Work to do; there's much cut out to their hands; The Lord of the Vineyard will not ſuffer them to be idle upon his Watch, he'l find them awakening Work: There's head-Work, hand-Work, heart-Work, tongue-Work, life-Work; there's Work within and without, at home and abroad, their own and others, for this life and a better; there's Work enough to keep one awake, and the more we Work in theſe ſpiritual Exerciſes of Faith, Love, Deſires, *&c.* the more watchful we ſhall be, and the better Watchmen, and Workmen.

And therefore the Lord will find new Work for old idle Profeſſors (if he delight in them) he'l bring ſlumbring Virgins to Soul-travel again, and awaken them to purpoſe; they'l ſee ſuch hard labour therein, as will be hard to ſleep upon; And when loytering Servants fall once to labour again heartily in God's Harveſt, how they

they'l ſweat at it, and do moſt and beſt at laſt; when they ſee, how much Work they have to do in a little time, how they'l Work and Watch, and Watch in Work?

6. *Expectation.* Souldiers upon the Watch, wait in expectation either of an Enemy to approach, or a Friend to appear, that they may be in a poſture of oppoſition or reception, to reſiſt their Enemies, and to relieve their Friends; So in this ſpiritual Watch, we muſt be daily in expectation of our Enemies, vvho will be upon us on a ſudden; and if they take us at unawares, we are in an ill taking, (as we uſe to ſay) 'twill be our great prejudice, and their advantage; An Enemy not looked for, will be before-hand with us, and hurt us moſt when we can leaſt help our ſelves; 'Tis a time he would chuſe of all other, when he is leaſt expected; as knowing he ſhall be leaſt reſiſted. Our Adverſary watches our ſlumbring times moſt, that he may take us napping, and take what he pleaſes from us; and therefore we muſt ever Watch in expectation of him, that he

may never come unlooked for: Nothing will more dishearten and disappoint him. Our expectation frustrates his; Our unwearied Watchings will weary him out; whereas it is a fair invitation to the envious one, to lay aside our expectation of him, who likes best to come unlooked for, and is most to be suspected, when he is least expected.

We must be in expectation also of our best spiritual Friend, who comes oft skipping like a Roe, and loves sometimes to take us on the suddain, to see how we are provided: He hath given us a fair Warning, saying, *Behold I come like a thief* (that is, secretly, suddenly) *in the night*; That we may ever have him upon our hearts, and he may not come in an hour, when we think not of him. Such a blessed Guest would not come unlooked for, whose visits are so Gracious, his love so precious; We are like to lose much of the sweet and comfort of holy and happy communion with him, if we wait little on him and for him; He'l not tarry long, where he is not long looked

looked for and longingly; there he comes and goes ſuddenly, he thinks himſelf nothing vvell or vvelcome there, where his company is not looked for; he takes it for a great neglect of him, when we do not expect him and he will not be long or much there, vvhere he is little looked for.

What are the ſpecial times for a Chriſtians Spiritual Watch?

As all Chriſtians ſhould Watch, ſo at all times; There is a time for all things under the Sun, but no time to loſe in ſpiritual ſlumber; There's not a ſpare minute for ſinful ſecurity; A Chriſtian muſt never give over Working, Watching, Warring; his labours in the Lord muſt end with his life, when he dies in the Lord; and his Watch muſt not fall, till he fall aſleep in *Jeſus*. This in general, but more eſpecially,

1. In times of ſpiritual deſertion, when the Lord has withdrawn his Spirit and Grace, and ſeems to be aſleep and ſilent to us; Oh then 'tis high time

time to call upon our ſelves, ſaying, *Awake, awake*; and to cry mightily to the Lord, to awake, and keep not ſilence. When our Beloved is going, then 'tis time (as we love him and our Souls) to ſtir up our ſtrength, to take hold of him, and not let him go for a World. Does he begin to eſtrange himſelf from us? On cry heartily to him in their language, *Oh thou Hope of* Iſrael, *why ſhouldſt thou be a ſtranger, as a waifaring man that tarries but for a night, &c?* Thou art in the midſt of us, Oh leave us not: Wo unto us, when he ſhall depart from us! How many evils will come when he goes away? We have all good in the chiefeſt Good, and all evil without him; 'Tis loſs unſpeakable to want him, whoſe abſence nothing in Heaven or Earch can make up: If he ſay, Depart from me, there will be a corner of Hell in it here, as it will be the very Hell in Hell hereafter, *Depart ye curſed, &c.*

Jer. 14. 8.

Wo and alas unto us, for we have ſadly ſinned away his gracious preſence as ever any people did, by car-

leſs ſlumbring, and carnal ſecurity; How oft hath he found us ſlugging it upon Beds of eaſe, when his finger has been put in at the hole of the door? We have made him wait, till his head hath been filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night; and yet we have not opened the door to him, neither for his importunity, nor becauſe he is our friend. Had it been an enemy or a ſtranger had done thus, he could have born it; but that his own familiar friends ſhould lift up the heel againſt him; that ever they ſhould prove ſo hard-hearted againſt ſo tender-hearted a Saviour; this goes to the heart indeed. And now our Beloved ſtands behind the Wall, as one highly offended, that will ſcarce look at thoſe that have ſhut their eyes againſt his Light, and their hearts againſt his Love: This glorious Sun covers himſelf as with a Cloud, becauſe we ſleep out the ſhinings of his Light, and ſlumber out ſweet breathing-times ſhamefully, even in the ſight of the Sun; and leaves us under thick ſpiritual darkneſs (even ſuch as may *Cant.* 5. 2.

be

be felt) and we are covered as with a Cloud in his anger; And ſhall we not now awake, and cry after him vvith open mouth, heart, eyes, ſaying as the Daughters of Jeruſalem, *Whither is our Beloved gone, whither is he turned aſide? Oh, return, return; make haſte our Beloved, and be thou like a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices:* Oh why ſhould we be as they that are vailed, and turn aſide, *&c?* Ah, the longer he is abſent from us, the worſe it will be with us every day; and the greater diſtance from him, the greater our unhappineſs: Oh then, as the two Diſciples, when the Lord Jeſus made as if he would go further, conſtrained him, ſaying, *Abide with us, for 'tis towards evening,* &c. So novv vvhen he carries ſtrange to us, makes as if he vvould away, and carry all avvay vvith him too; We ſhould even lay hands on him, and hold him by an humble holy force, ſaying, *Abide with us, for 'tis towards evening,* &c. The day declines.

Cant. 6. 1, Cant. 8. 14

2. In times of ſpiritual declenſion; When noble Vines prove degenerate Plants;

Plants; When Stars fall from Heaven; When many begin in the Spirit, and end in the fleſh. Oh then we had need be upou our ſpiritual Watch, and take ſpecial heed to our ſpirits; When ſo many loſe firſt life and love, and leave their firſt Works; We had need have our eyes about us, yea within us, and look into our own hearts, leſt we be at a loſs there too, and cool within; When ſo many fall away. *Let him that thinketh he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall*; 'Tis a time of (almoſt) an univerſal conſumption in Spirituals; never ſo great decayes in inwards; Chriſtians Spirits fail and fall ſadly; Stomachs gone, every where, to the beſt food; little ſpiritual Palate is left in any to relliſh the ſweet ſavour of Chriſts precious Oyntments; all ſpiritual ſenſes dull and heavy; And ſhall we not now awake? Feel our own Pulſes; Conſult vvith ſpiritual Phyſitians, and make diligent uſe of all quickning and ſtrengthning means of Grace, leſt we alſo be left under the ſame ſpiritual languiſhings, and have woful occaſion to cry out another day,

Our

Our leanneſs, our leanneſs?

3. When an hour of ſpiritual Temptation is upon us, when many are led Captive by ſpiritual Wickedneſſes; Oh then that Counſel is moſt ſeaſonable, *Be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary, the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour.* 'Tis not for us to ſlumber when Satan Watches; nor to ſhut our eyes, when he's running up and down with open mouth; How eaſily may he make a prey of us, when we lie ſleeping at his feet? The Devil is come down with great rage, he will be worſt at laſt, and do much miſchief in a little time; and if the envious one finds us aſleep, when he is moſt awakened, watching over us for evil; What a World of evil will he bring upon us? What havock will he make amongſt us, yea within us? What Tares will he ſow? If Satan be let looſe, he will be working with all power and policy; and if he find us at a looſe end, ſleeping idlely in the Devils Shop; he'l be very buſie with us, and ſet us a work to our own woe; We may expect a flood

1 Pet. 5. 8.

flood of ſtrong deluſions, and ſtrange temptations will be iſſuing out of his wide mouth, which gapes for us; if we lie ſleeping in his way, we ſhall be carried away in theſe filthy ſtreams, like dead fiſh. The Prince of darkneſs is broke out, and ſmoke is broke out of the bottomleſs Pit with him; there's great danger of being loſt in it, or choaked by it, eſpecially if we walk as blind men in a ſpiritual ſleep.

Oh what need then to awake (if ever) and to call upon the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* to awake, and reſcue his darlings from the mouth of this roaring Lyon; to ariſe for his prey, to divide the ſpoyl with the mighty, and to lead captivity captive; If we lie down to ſleep now with folded arms, leaving the guide of our ſpirits, and he leave us alone to the miſguidings of our own deceitful hearts; how will the ſubtil Serpent deceive us at every turn, and turn us out of the way, to the right hand, or to the left; eſpecially now the old experienced deceiver, *transforms himſelf into an Angel of Light*, that he may drive on his Soul-

cooſening trade, the more myſteriouſly and miſchievouſly, putting darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs. Why then, 'tis more then time to awake out of ſleep, to get our ſpirits quickned up by the influence of God's good Spirit, and to muſter up all our ſpiritual forces, ſpeedily and ſtrenuouſly, putting *on the whole Armour of God* on the right hand, and on the left; that we may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the Devil on all hands, in this evil day, *and having done all to ſtand.*

4. In times of great expectation: When we look for great things from Heaven, when *Zion* is in travel for glorious Births, when precious promiſes are nigh accompliſhment, *the Mountains ready to drop new Wine, and the Hills to flow with Milk*; As, the Spirits pouring out like floods, *&c.* A Spirit of Life i'th Witneſſes, and a Voice out of the Clouds, ſaying, *Come up hither*; *A Nation to be born at once!* Is it not time to cry, Awake, awake, the Glory of the Lord is riſing, *&c.* Oh ſhould we not look with both eyes,

Joel 3.18

eyes, and liſten with both ears, to hear vvhen it ſhall be ſaid; *Who hath heard ſuch a thing, who hath ſeen ſuch things? ſhall the Earth be made to bring forth in one day?* Were it not great pitty to ſleep out the awakening providences that are upon us, making way to fulfil ſuch glorious promiſes? Is not this the language of awakened Saints, crying, *Awake, awake! put on ſtrength, thou Arm of the Lord, as in the dayes of Old, &c.* and ſhall we now cry, *A little ſleep, a little ſlumber, &c.* God forbid. O now, now the Lord's Remembrancers muſt *give him no reſt*, nor reſt day nor night under a ſpirit of ſlumber, *till Jeruſalem be made a praiſe in the Earth*, and the Reſt of his Feet be glorious. Iſa. 66. 8.

'Tis the common cry amongſt God's People (when they are in ſtraits, and at a ſtand) *Awake, O Lord, why ſleepeſt thou?* Whenas, alas, 'tis they that are aſleep, & muſt be awakened (or they'l be *nonplus'd* ever and anon) and aſſoon as they are awakened, they'l ſee it and ſay ſo; We wonder the Work goes on no faſter, and that the Lord

does no more for us; whereas 'tis a wonder he has wrought so much for us, or does any thing at all for our good, who are grown so heedless, heartless and careless under Mercies.

However his work goes on in his own way, whether we sleep or wake; for his heart is upon't, and he *neither slumbers nor sleeps*, but is running his course as a Giant refreshed with Wine, and will leave his slumbring Servants behind, to follow him with shame and sorrow; *The Ancient of days* will keep his time, not lose a day, nor miss a minute (however we lose time). And he will give a good account one day what he has been doing for his poor Children, when they will not be able to answer one of a thousand for their slumbrings and wandrings.

5. When the Lord looks for great things from us, having done great things for us, commanded mighty salvations, communicated choice mercies, commended peculiar Gospel-blessings to us, and all by a strong hand through wonders of Providence. Now when and where the Lord does much, [much]

much; then and there he looks for much, very much. He may well call us to an account at ſuch a time, and ſay, *What do you more than others?* Mat. 5. 47. Special mercy may challenge ſingular duty; He has been at extraordinary charge and coſt with us, and he expects more than ordinary in our ſpirits and ſervices; 'Tis not for us to ſerve him with that which coſts us nought, when we have coſt him ſo dear. One would think, the weight of ſuch Obligations lying upon us, ſhould effectually awaken us, to look up to Heaven, for ſuch a ſuitable and ſeaſonable communication of his Spirit and Grace, as may more clearly inform us in that high and heavenly Leſſon, (moſt proper for the day) and more fully enable us to take it out, namely, to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work, &c.* A low ſpirit and lazy ſervices are moſt unanſwerable to high and mighty diſpenſations, and will be moſt uncomfortable. Shall we do leaſt for him, when he hath done moſt for us? Hath he watched over us, and his eyes been al-

Deut. 11. 12. wayes upon us, *from the beginning of the year unto the end?* And shall we slumber now like slothful servants, as if we had neither eyes to see him working for us, nor hands to work for him? shall living Mercies lie dead by us, and we dying in the midst of them, offering up the dead in sacrifice to the living God, who hath given us our lives for a prey? shall we *thus requite the Lord like a foolish people and unwise?* will it not be ill taken at our hands that we should be worst to him, when he is best to us? No wonder, if he withhold his Spirit, when we thus grieve, tempt, and quench it by a spirit of security; how can we look for other but that he should be taking away his Golden Candlestick, and the Light too, when so many do little else but play or sleep by it? We must not think to lie alwayes sleeping with the breast i'th mouth: he will be covering the blessed Paps, girt about with a Golden Girdle.

Deut. 32. 6.

Applica-

APPLICATION.

By way of Information.

1. Is it a Goſpel-duty to watch? Then ſee the neceſſity of an awakening Miniſtry; in ſuch a ſleepy Age as this, there was never more need of awakened and awakening Overſeers to watch over us, to lift up their voice like a Trumpet, to cry aloud and ſpare not, ſaying, Awake! O what need of *goads and nails to be faſtened in our ſides, and upon our hearts, by the Maſters of the Aſſemblies from that one Shepherd!* 'Tis time for Wiſdom to *cry in the Streets, to utter her voice in the chief places of concourſe*, ſaying unto you, O Men, I call, *&c.* When the Virgins ſlumber thus, both the wiſe and fooliſh, 'twill be a great mercy to have the Word of the Lord, as a hammer at our doors, yea as fire within us; and to feel the Sword of the Spirit pricking us to the very heart, to keep us awake in ſpirit, when ſo many are heavy with ſleep there: There was

Eccleſ. 12. 11.

Prov. 1. 20 & 8. 4.

never more work, than now, for the Sons of Thunder. Ah, that the ſpirit of ſlumber that is fallen upon this Generation, will make work enough for all the faithful watchmen, throughout the Nation; And me-thinks the ſtrong ſlumbrings of ſo many ſleepy Profeſſors, ſhould exceedingly ſtartle and awaken thoſe that watch for ſouls; 'Tis not for them to ſlumber of all others, eſpecially at ſuch a time, when ſo many lie ſleeping round about them; *Iſa.56.12.* O wo, wo to *the blind Watchmen, the dumb Dogs that cannot bark ſleeping, lying down, loving no ſlumber*; who make beds of eaſe for bedrid ſpirits, and ſow Pillows to ſluggards arm-holes; who propheſie ſmooth things, to a people that love to have it ſo, that are all for eaſie work, or none at all. Oh then let all the watchmen of the houſe of *Iſrael*, whom the Lord hath ſet upon the Watch-Tower, *Watch and pray*, and preach in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, and give the people warning of this hour of temptation, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, that they may deliver their own ſouls, and

happily

happily recover others alſo from the ſnare of the Devil, who are (aſleep in his arms, and) taken captive by him at his will; And let all the Lord's People highly prize, and heartily affect an heart-awakening, ſearching, quickning Miniſtry, and welcome that word moſt, which comes moſt ſtiringly home, and is moſt ſoundly ſet on by the power of the Spirit.

2. Is it a Goſpel-duty to watch? Then what a ſpecial mercy is it at this day to have an awakened heart. The Keeper of *Iſrael* watches very graciouſly over thoſe he keeps watchfull; 'Tis no common favour to be kept alive at ſuch a dead time; Sure the Father of mercies looks moſt ſweetly to thoſe Children, and will ſmile moſt lovingly upon them, whom he cauſeth to lye broad-waken, looking after him; O bleſſed be his Name, that he reſerves a little remnant by him, waiting on him and for him! What would become of us all, if a few were not upon their Watch? would not the Lord awake to judgment, were all aſleep about him, and none awaked to cry for mercy?

would not he lay about to purpose, did not some hold his hands, by lifting up their hands and hearts to Heaven? Is he not ready to say, Let me alone, that I may consume them? and is he not let alone by all, but an handful of Wrestling Saints that have got within him? Would he not be gone, think you, but that his Dear Ones watch him, cry mightily after him, and will not let him go? Nay, is he not going about to take his Glory, Spirit, Grace, Gospel, and all away with him? 'Tis well for us there are some watching, waiting, weeping about the Bed of *Solomon* (loth to let him go) *valiant men, even the Valiant of Israel*; O happy Souls, that lie ever upon this Heavenly Watch! who watch the more, the rather, because so many slumber: It will go well with them, how ill soever things go; For,

Cant. 3. 7.

1. They are neareſt Mercy of all other; if any ſweet influences fall from Heaven, *they are waiting with mouths wide open, as for the latter rain* (as of old they waited for *Job*). If the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe, they are

Job 29. 23

like

like to ſee him firſt; if his light ſhine, their eyes are open; and if his love breath, their hearts are open; if good reports come to make the bones fat, who but they will hear, who are ever hearkning? When ever the Lord ſhall open the door of hope they are next hand; when the day breaks, and the ſhadows flee away, they'l be the bleſſed ſpectators, who watch more than they that watch for the morning. If the Spirit be poured forth as floods, who'l drink ſo deep as theſe gaping thirſty Souls? When ever the King ſits at Table and cauſes the Spikenard to ſend forth a ſweet ſmell, they muſt needs feel the ſavour of his oyntments, who wait as Olive-Plants round about his Table, when ever bleſſings are handed out, they are within reach. Oh 'tis a rich mercy to be neareſt mercy.

2. They are fitteſt for Duty. Is there any work to do for God, his Cauſe, his Peaple, they are near hand, waiting for it, ſaying, What wilt thou have us to do, Lord? If a word of Command come, 'tis welcome, they are upon their Watch: If the Lord

ſay,

ſay, Come, they come; and if he ſay Go, they go; their loynes are girt. If the King of glory look out, and cry, Who is on my ſide? who? they are ready to look out of the window towards him, ſaying, Here are we, Lord. They are called to his foot (as the *Iſa.* 41. 2. man of the Eaſt) onely waiting for a word from his mouth: they ſet themſelves in a poſture on purpoſe, to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth. Yea, awakened hearts, whoſe eyes have ſeen the King in his beauty, have an holy ambition to do as much, and as wel in their Maſters ſervice, as he ſhall give them power to do, of his good pleaſure: Whereas the ſlothful ſervant is ever to ſeek both in will and power, when his Maſter has work for him; he will either ſlip out of the way or ſleep at work. If Jeſus Chriſt call oth' ſudden, and have any haſte of work, he's all ungirt, and will be ſo long a getting ready, till the buſineſs might be half done: But the vigilant diligent ſervant is at an hours warning; he is the veſſel unto honour, meet for the Maſters uſe, and prepared for every good work.

3. They

3. They are like to be richeſt in experience; they muſt needs be men of great obſervation, whoſe eyes are ever open to behold the gracious and glorious goings of God in Providences and Ordinances; He will make moſt of his glory and *goodneſs to paſs before thoſe* that watch and wait according to his appointment, (as *Moſes* upon the Rock.) They'l meet with many choiſe pledges of divine love, many drops of myrrhe from Chriſts fingers, and kiſſes from his lips, that watch at his feet; his ſteps will drop fatneſs upon such as lye in his way, waiting for him; Hee'l lay up much of his Heavenly treaſure in holy awakned hearts, and reveal moſt of his ſecrets to his hearkning, hidden ones; The watchful, faithful Stewards will have out of their *treaſure to bring forth, new and old*; they'l have all maner of pleaſant fruits laid up at their gates for the Beloved; they'l be able to give the beſt account, what God does for their Souls, who watch their own hearts beſt & wait moſt for him there; He will be much with them, whom he finds much at home, and

Exod. 33. 19. 22.

Mat. 13. 52. *Cant.* 7. 13.

and make out much of himself to them. Watchful *Israelites* will be the best provided of hidden *Manna*, they'll be before-hand with all others, in respect of the most experience, and best intelligence from Heaven.

4. They are readiest for the appearance of Christ. If he come, at morning, or evening, mid-day, or mid-night, at what watch soever he comes, they are watching; yea when they sleep, their heart waketh; they are ready to go forth to meet the Bridegroom, should he call at mid-night; and his salvation will be most welcome, where it has been most waited for; What an happy and heavenly posture was good old *Simeon* in, to meet Christ in the Temple, who had so long waited in the Spirit of consolation of *Israel?* how ready was he to receive that blessed Child with open arms and heart too? where was Christ more welcom, than to little *Zacheus*, who was got upon his Watch-Tower (the Sycamor-tree) desiring to see him? how sweetly was Christs heart affected towards this poor waiting Soul? He look

Cant. 5. 2.

Mat. 25. 6.

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Luke 19. 3, 4, 5.

looks up with a loving eye, to ſatisfie his longing looks; and how happy does this man think himſelf in ſo bleſſed a gueſt; he received him joyfully. Oh how ready will the quick-ſighted Eagles be to gather about him, whoſe eyes are ever looking towards this rising Sun? *Behold I come quickly*, ſaith he; *Amen*: Say they, *Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* Obſerve, how ſweetly that lovely word (*Amen*) is couched betwixt them, and their hearts together in it! *Mat.* 24. 28. *Rev.* 22. 20.

Uſe of Examination.

Let us give our Souls a viſit in the Name of the Lord, and commune ſecretly and ſeriouſly with our own hearts about our Spiritual Watch.

Diſcoveries of Spiritual Slumber.

1. Is the Lord ſilent to thee, who hath often uſed to ſpeak much to thy heart, and to beſpeak it? Doſt thou hear ſeldom from him? will he ſcarce give

give thee a word? why then thou may
eſt be jealous of thy ſelf, that thy hea
is aſleep; for he will have a mout
to ſpeak, where there is an ear to hea
Canſt thou not remember the mond
of old, when he gave in many wor
in ſeaſon? has he not oft ſpoke to th
heart, when man ſpoke to thy ear
And does he now keep ſilence? Do
thou only hear the voice of a man no
and ſo runneſt to *Eli* (as *Samuel* did
Doſt thou hear much without, and li
tle or nothing within? Does not thi
ear affect thine heart? Is not the Wo
as a fire within thee? Doſt thou ha
upon the bare outward adminiſtrati
and art thou a ſtranger to the glorio
miniſtration of the Spirit? Why ſu
thy watch is down, and he ſeems
ſlumber. And now he hides his
from thy breathing: thou crieſt, a
he will not anſwer thee. Ask th
ſoul ſolemnly, What's the matter?
his ear heavy? Is there not a cau
within? Is not thy heart heavy? H
not he called, and thou haſt not heard
Has not he knocked, and thou n
opened? Is it not thus, O ſlumbri

Soul

Soul? Speak out, and tell the Lord how it is within.

2. Art not thou ſilent before the Lord, who uſedſt to cry mightily after him? Is not thine heart ſhut up now, which thou waſt wont to pour forth? thy ſighings come not before the Lord, as they have done, and thy groanings are hid from him. Art not thou a ſtranger to thy own cloſet, where thou haſt much ſought him in ſecret? Surely thy heart is fallen into a deep ſleep; 'tis a ſad ſwooning-time with thy ſluggiſh ſpirit: how haſt thou loſt thy heart in point of love to prayer, and life in it? Oh waſt thou throughly awakened, thou wouldſt not for a world give over this thriving Trade of ſpiritual begging: thou couldſt not keep ſo long out of his preſence, who hath given thee ſo many ſweet viſits in prayer: the hypocrite will not pray alwaies: and 'tis no wonder, for he cannot pray at all in Gods account: But that a true *Iſraelite*, who has had power with God in prayer, ſhould ceaſe to pour out a prayer before him; this is ſtrange, and yet not more

Job 27. 10

ſtrange

ſtrange than true amongſt ſlumbring Chriſtians, who cannot chuſe but give over praying, when they give over watching: The Spirit of prayer muſt needs be ſilent under a ſpirit of ſlumber.

3. Is not thy Spiritual Warfare maintained? doſt not thou wraſtle againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs, &c? Doſt thou not feel the Law of the mind warring againſt the Law in thy members? Art thou not at odds with thy own heart every day, and quarrelling with it for heart-ſins? Why then the heart is aſleep, whileſt thy luſts lie ſleeping within thee; thou doſt not watch, whileſt thou doſt not war. How ſhametully wilt thov be foiled by thy luſts thou fighteſt not againſt? Sin will get head and heart too, whileſt thy heart is aſleep: thy luſts like ſo many flies will ſwarm about thy ſleepy ſoul. Thou doſt not reckon with thy ſelf about thy dying to ſin, ſelf, *&c.* Alas, how dead is thy heart in the mean time? thou haſt given over thy complaining of the body of death, and yet thy luſts are more lively; and thou

live

liveleſs: they ſtrong, and thou art weak: ſure they are awake, and thou ſleepeſt.

4. Art not thou ſenſible of the ſubtile inſinuations, and ſecret ſuggeſtions of Satan in this buſie day of his? Doſt thou meet with none of his buffetings, now he layes ſo about him? Doſt thou feel none of his fiery darts, now Hell is broke looſe? Mayſt thou not be very ſuſpicious that a ſpirit of ſlumber is upon thee, and the evil-ſpirit rocks thee? Art not thou pleaſing thy ſelf with ſmooth things, lying quietly upon a pillow of carnal ſecurity, and Satan pleaſing of thee too, and loth to diſquiet thee? Art thou at eaſe in *Zion*, ſinging a *Requiem* to thy ſoul? why thou mayeſt ſleep on for him, and take thy reſt. 'Tis not for his purpoſe to awaken us out of falſe dreams: this cunning Fowler is moſt buſie with awakened ſpirits that are ſtrugling from him, that would be ever upon the wing Chriſtward; but he ſtirs little when men lie aſleep at his feet, only watches over them: he makes leaſt noiſe there, but does moſt

hurt. Oh the Myſtery of Iniquity works moſt and worſt, amongſt idle ſouls, that work not, watch not.

5. Doſt not thou ſympathize with the ſuffering Servants of Jeſus Chriſt? Is not thy heart affected with *the afflictions of Joſeph?* Haſt thou little or no fellow-feeling of thy Brethrens calamities? Canſt not bleed in their wounds at thine own heart, whoſe blood has been ſpilt like water upon the ground, for the teſtimony of Jeſus? Sure, then thy ſpirit within thee is benummed under a ſpirit of ſecurity, and almoſt paſt feeling. Did not the ſad cryes of the diſtreſſed Proteſtants, in the Valleys of *Piedmont*, and in *Germany*, ſaying, Have pity upon us, O our Friends, have pity upon us, for the hand of the Lord hath touched us! Did not (I ſay) their dolefull complaints come to thine ears, and did not this go to thine heart? do not thy bowels ſound within thee towards them who are ſighing it out, Our bowels, our bowels! doſt thou not make lamentation over them, crying, Alas, alas! Is it nothing to thee, there are ſo

ſo many mourners in Zion at this day hanging their Harps upon the Willows? and doſt thou put no tears i'th bottle for them?

And further, how ſtands thy heart affected towards ſuch as are afflicted in ſpirit? Does not thy ſoul bleed within thee towards poor wounded ſouls, who are ready to bleed to death for want of the gracious preſence of the Lord of life? Canſt thou not mourn in ſecret, for ſuch as walk mournfully without the Sun? Time was, when thine head was as water, and thy eyes as fountains of tears, that thou couldſt not but weep with thoſe that wept, and mourn (as the Doves of the valleys) with them that mourned: but now thy eyes are dry, thy bowels ſtrait, and thy heart hard. Oh what ſtrong ſtupidity is upon thee? if all the members ſhould ſuffer, when but one ſuffers? how ſtupid and ſenſeleſs is that one, that ſuffers not when ſo many ſuffer? I cannot but pity ſuch ſlumbering Chriſtians, who want yearning bowels of pity, when I conſider, what ſharp medicines muſt be applyed to their inſenſi-

ble ſtupified ſpirits, to cut them to the quick, and fetch up their ſpiritual ſenſes, to ſympathize with Chriſt in his members.

6. Is not thy ſoul vexed at the filthy converſation of the ungodly, as *Lots* righteous ſoul was? Doſt thou not bear the backſlidings of Gods own people, as a burden upon thine heart before the Lord? Doſt thou not inwardly tremble at the diſhonour put upon that Name which hath been proclaimed amongſt us, in ſo loud languages, as glorious in holineſs, &c? Are not the abominations of the Times the very abomination of thy ſoul? Canſt thou not mourn in ſecret, for the open Pride, prophaneneſs, profuſeneſs of ſo many thouſands in our Iſrael at this day? Why then, (believe it) thy heart is aſleep indeed, when the crying ſins of this adulterous generation do not awaken it. 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

Oh how many, who have appeared *as Children of the day, have fellowſhip now with the unfruitful works of darkneſs*? who once ſeemed white as ſnow, and are now as black as a coal; who

ſome

ſome years ſince would not have touched the garment ſpotted with the fleſh, have now put on the *Æthiopian* skin again, and the Leopards ſpots; having once eſcaped the pollutions of the fleſh, and are again entangled therewith.

How are the honourable things of the Law, and Goſpel too, become contemptible in the eyes of many, who ſeemed to prize them above thouſands of Gold or Silver? How are the precious Pearls of Jeſus Chriſt, which are worth more than a World, and of vvhich the World is not vvorthy, trampled under foot, as if they were nothing worth! O what loathing of Manna, even amongſt Iſraelites? what turning of Grace into Wantonneſs? Horrible things are done in our *Iſrael*, and that in the ſight of the Sun, publiſhed in the *ſtreets of Aſhkelon, ſo that the daughters of the Uncircumciſed triumph!* And ſhall not the daughters of *Zion* ſigh and mourn for theſe Abominations, which are more than enow to break ones ſleep, and heart too, which break the Lord's own heart: Ezek. 6. 9.

And if thou layeſt them not to heart, thy heart's aſleep.

Directions for Watchfulneſs.

1. Ever ſet before thee, the All-ſeeing Eye of *Jehovah*, which is ever upon thee; His Eyes, which are ten thouſand times brighter than the Sun, daily looked upon by an eye of Faith, will be very awakening; Think much upon thoſe heart-ſtirring meditations, of God's glorious Preſence, which were ſo much upon *Davids* heart; as, Gods encompaſſing thy path and thy bed, beſetting thee behind and before, looking thee through in all places, at all times; watching over every thought of thy heart, every word of thy tongue *&c.* O ſay oft within thy ſelf, in thy goings out, and comings in, *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence? &c.* The Keeper of *Iſrael*, who neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps, looks upon thee in all thy ſlumbrings, with a broad eye; thou art never out of his ſight, ſleeping nor waking; he never looks off of thee. How ſoundly was *Jacob* rouſed out of ſleep,

Pſal. 139. 1, 2, 3, 4.

ſleep, upon the apprehenſion of Gods dreadful preſence; He *awaked out of ſleep, and ſaid, The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not*, &c. Had I been aware of him, I had been awake. Serious thoughts of approaching glory, will put one beſide their ſleep, and ſtartle one to purpoſe; *Fear yee not me (ſaith the Lord)* and *will you not tremble at my preſence?* Why then, 'tis becauſe you *have eyes and ſee not; eares and hear not*; Holy tremblings will prevent heavy ſlumbrings. Oh that our drowſie Spirits, were continually overawed with the deep meditations of the omniſcience and omnipreſence of the Father of ſpirits, how effectually would they be awakned out of carnal and formal ſecurity? The eyes of Gods glory looking full upon us, will keep open the eyes of our heads, and hearts too; viſions of God will clear up our ſpiritual ſight, and quicken it. Well, his eyes are alwayes upon ours and his heart goes along with ours, what need have we of watchful eyes and hearts.

Gen. 18.16 17.

Jer. 5.21, 22.

2. Wait for the glorious miniſtration of the Sririt, under every outward

adminiſtration; This charge is given
Rev.2.3. to the ſeven Churches, by him which had the ſeven Spirits of God, walking in the midſt of the Golden Candleſticks, when he would earneſtly provoke them to watchfulneſs, threatning to come upon them as a thief, if they did not watch: *Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.* This bleſſed Counſel is recommended ſeven times, in two Chapters, to add the greater weight to it, and to make deeper impreſſion. O ſet that ſtone with ſeven eyes, before thine eyes, to awaken them and ſpirit them:
Zech. 3.9. All the workings of th'eternal Spirit on our ſpirits are awakening; when ever the Word comes with life, in the power of the Spirit, it wil raiſe us out of ſpiritual ſlumbers. Indeed a lower diſpenſation will not do it: Oh how dead we lie at prayer, hearing, reading, *&c.* till the Spirit of Life breath upon us;
2 Kings 4. 31. we are little moved, when the Spirit moves not: All's but as *Eliſha's* ſtaffe upon the Child, there was neither voice nor hearing; but if the holy Spirit ſtretch himſelf upon us, his eyes upon

upon ours, (as it were) then our eyes will be opened; How eaſie a thing is it, to lie ſleeping and ſlumbering in and under any Form, where there is no Power; how dead we lie by the letter and it by us, without the Spirit? Oh how heartleſs and Spiritleſs are moſt profeſſors at this day, as the very dry bones in the open valley, reſting and ruſting in in outward forms, not feeling inward power; and there they may reſt till they rot, and lie till they die, if the Spirit do not breath upon them, as upon thoſe dry bones. How many of Chriſt's witneſſes are ſpiritually dead, taking up in the letter without life? and in this unſuitable, uncomfortable poſture will they lie languiſhing under ſpiritual Lethargies and Conſumptions, till the Spirit of life from God enter into them. That bleſſed reſurrection of the ſpirits of the Saints, out of the grave of formality and ſecurity, which is more to be deſired a thouſand times than their raiſing up in power and glory i'th world, without a plentiful effuſion, and powerful operation

Ezek. 1. 37. 1. 2.

of

of the holy Spirit, may not be expected, cannot be effected; If the Spirit of judgement and burning fall upon their hearts, it will fire them out of formality, and ſtartle them out of ſecurity; when he ſhall come down, with a ſound from Heaven, as with a mighty ruſhing wind, upon the ſluggiſh Spirits of the Slumbring Virgins, how will they be awakned to aſtoniſhment, as the Apoſtles were, when the *Holy Ghoſt reſted as fire upon them*, &c.

3. Be diligent, frequent, and fervent in ſpiritual Exerciſes, if you would keep up your ſpiritual Watch. Conſtant, conſcientious diſcharge of duty, will be a ſpecial remedy againſt cuſtomary formality, and carnal ſecurity; pure Religion is no idle Trade; 'twill find us work enough, (can we but find in our hearts to fall to it; aud that full of variety and excellency, to keep us awake and at work all our dayes. 'Tis not for want of work that any ſtand idle in the Lords Vineyard, but for want of will to it. 'Tis a very buſie time with Jeſus Chriſt, his heart is upon his work; and 'tis ſo with his

wait-

waiting-ſervants too, for his work is upon their hearts: and they that are lazie and ſleepy-headed now, are like the Sluggard that ſleeps in harveſt, finding leaſt to do, where there is moſt work: And they are ſlothful ſervants above all other, who are moſt ſleepy, when they ſhould do the moſt and beſt ſervice. How buſie will the Devil be with ſuch drouſie ones, and hardeſt at work with them, while they are at idle work, to caſt them into a dead ſleep? His work goes on, where ours ceaſes: How much work have we found Satan in theſe dayes, by neglecting Gods work? ſince we have left our firſt work, we have left our firſt Watch: and we find it now work more than enough to keep our ſouls awake. Omiſſion of ſpirituall duties hath brought upon us an habitual indiſpoſition to duties, that we find no heart to them, feel little heart or heat in them. Since Chriſtians have ungirt their loyns, and ceaſed from ſpiritual motions and actions, their veſſels are empty, their lamps going out, and themſelves laid down to ſleep. How

dull

dull and heavy are their ſpiritual ſenſ
grown for want of holy exerciſes? ho
liſtleſs and liveleſs are their ſpirits?

Oh then, 'tis high time, that all th
faithful ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhou
fall afreſh upon their Maſters wo
with double diligence; to redeem th
time which ſtole away while they ſlep
and can never be recalled. And inde
Chriſtians, of all the men i'th world
ſhould not loſe time, who have th
beſt and moſt imployment. Oh the
out of hand, take up that old thrivi
trade of the practice of Piety in a
Goſpel-duties, from a pure principle
as ever you would be found watchin
at the coming of your Lord.

4. Converſe much with livel
Saints, who are much upon their Sp
ritual Watch; their company will b
very awakening, who are well awake
ned. They will be knocking at th
door of thy heart, feeling thy ſpiritua
pulſe, and asking thee, if all be we
within; they cannot but be joggin
at thy elbow, if thou keep thy hand
in thy boſom, and lie ſlumbring wit
folded arms. As iron ſharpeneth iron

doth the face of a man his friend. atchful ſervants will be calling off e ſlumbering ones from beds of ſecu-y; they will be whetting up the ll and lazy ſpirits of others, who ve a good edge upon their own. A-ongſt ſluggiſh Chriſtians, 'tis a thou-nd to one, you'l grow ſleepy too for mpany; Sluggards will infect one nother with the ſleepy Evil; they'l y a Cuſhion for you to ſit down by em, and take your fill of this falſe ſt: There's no ſpiritual noiſe amongſt m, nor heavenly news; no heart-wakening words. All's either ſinful ence, or ſmooth words, huſhing one nother aſleep with their ſoft language. ivelеſs Chriſtians are like dying coals hich deaden one another, till there never a coal to warm at. Oh then, thou wouldſt have a watchfull ſpi-t in this ſlumbring age, look after mmunion in ſpirit with the moſt uick, and lively-ſpirited Saints; hea-nly ſparks, that are ever flying up-ard, as to their proper Region; they ill be warm, awakening, enlivening mpany, (being well heated by the fire

fire of the Spirit) for luke-warm drowsie, liveless Christians.

5. Be ever setting on work awakening Graces, by the assistance of the Spirit of Grace. Stir up the Graces
2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Christ that are most stirring; and they stir up thee, quicken thee, and set thee on fire, as sparks blown up, *&c.*

As, 1. *Lively Faith.* This is the new Creatures eye, quicker than the Eagles, excellent at watching. 'Tis the spiritual mans Seer, and the overseer of his watchings and workings; If this active grace be at work, it will keep the heart awake: The Watch cannot fall down, whilest Faith is up. It's a very busie grace, wch will keep us from sleeping, if it sleep not. Faith will be daily improving awakening Providences, quickening Ordinances, melting Mercies, searching Tryals; It will be ever taking in awakening considerations of the Majesty of the Creator, the Mutability of the Creature, of Mortality, Eternity, *&c.* It will be presenting awakening manifestations of the unconceiveable love of God, the incomparable loveliness of Christ,

admirable beauty of Holineſs, the unſpeakable bleſſedneſs of Heaven; It will be looking out at the eye, to ſee the King in his beauty, liſtening at the ear, to hear that voice, which his companions hear, waiting at heart to welcome his Spirit there: Faith is all life, full of Spirit, a quick Spring, which will ſet all on motion; 'Twill ſet the whole man on work, and actuate every habit of grace; Its operations are full of efficacy and variety; upward, inward, outward, it has a large ſphear of activity; Oh could we live the life of Faith at a higher rate, how lively ſhould we be, how watchful?

2. *Warm Love*; It's all heart and heat, there's a flame in it, which will enliven and awaken the moſt drowſie and heavy heart; There's much life in love, much action in this affection; it's activity will keep thee from ſecurity: Love is good at wathching, it will ſit up long for the Beloved; it cannot reſt till he reſt in his love upon it; It would not ſleep (with its good will) till it may lie in his boſom, and there it may reſt ſafely and ſweetly, when

Zeph. 3. 17. *Pſal.* 127. 2.

he

he gives his Beloved sleep. Love will wait and watch long, endure much; hard duty is easie to it, as *Jacob's* service for *Rachel*: Love lyes with eyes and heart open too, as loth to shut out Christ at either. It will wait long and longingly, for a look of his eye, a kisse from his mouth, the breathings of his love. An heart toucht with Christs love, cannot rest (as the needle touched with the Load-stone) but when and where it should. Love has a single eye, and will watch well; 'tis clear, and quick as the Doves; it will
Cant. 4.9. spy out its Beloved, and pierce his heart.

Oh could we but love much, we should watch much; and wait to meet our Beloved at every turn, in his
Cant. 7.12 Garden, in his Banqueting-house, in his Vineyard, to give up our loves to him; Earnest love will be early & late at work, and watch for Jesus Christ.

3. *Holy Fear.* It will keep strict watch and strong guard, for fear of surprisal: It is a wary and watchful grace, and cannot endure to be taken at unawares. It's ever attended with

a godly jealouſie, which will marvellouſly prevent carnal ſecurity. Indeed, they that have not this fear of God before their eyes, and upon their hearts, they'l cloze their eyes, ſtop their ears, harden their hearts, and grow careleſs and ſecure, as the men of *Laiſh*, even till fearfulneſs and trembling come upon them; and they (of all others) are in greateſt danger of the fear and the ſnare, who fear leaſt; the deepeſt fearleſs ſecurity, will bring on the heavieſt fearful calamity. Oh then let all the ſervants of the Lord watch over their own hearts, leſt they forſake the fear of the Almighty, and he leave them to a common, careleſs, fearleſs ſpirit, and they be inſenſibly overtaken with ſpiritual ſecurity: Oh *Sanctifie* Iſa. 8. 12, *the Lord of hoſts himſelf, let him be your* 13. *fear, let him be your dread, that you may neither fear their fear nor be afraid.* And indeed, the more fully thine heart is poſſeſſed with a filial, reverential fear of that glorious and fearful Name, *the Lord thy God*, the leſs wilt thou be Deut. 28. diſquieted with falſe heart-tormenting 58. fears and cares; *Bleſſed is he that*

feareth alwayes; he will be alwayes upon his Watch, to the preventing of much sin and sorrow, slumbring and wandring, sensuality and security.

4. *Heavenly Joy*; 'Tis very enlivening and heart-awakening; Like
Cant. 7. 9. that *of the best wine, which goes down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.* Where the spirit can rejoyce comfortably in the Lord, there his work will go on merrily; his Watch will be kept chearfully; such a soul can sing in the wayes of the Lord, and upon his watch even at mid-
Act. 16. 25. night (as *Paul* and *Silas*); Where an heavy heart drives heavily in all its watchings and workings. It's soon out of heart, and cryes, *What a wearisomness?* and, *Why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* Every Command is grievous, to one that is grieved in spirit, and every word and work (though easie) seems a burden to one that is a burden to himself: Now Spiritual Joy, is like *aqua caelestis*, it will recover a languishing, swooning spirit. This refined wine, drunk out of the cup of salvation, is full of quickning spirits

and will make a Christian hearty, spiritful and watchful: They that suck and are satisfied with the breasts of consolation, as they are cast into a sweet and sound sleep in the arms of Christ, so they will cast off sinful, sluggish security.

6. Let watching and Prayer go hand in hand; and they will lend a helping hand to one another; they are lively, lovely companions joyned together by Christs own hand, and would be linked together as with a chain of gold in every Christians heart. Watching and prayer are mutually helpful and successful.

First, *Watchfulness helps to lift up, and keep up Prayer, as* Aaron *and* Hur *held up the hands of* Moses, *Exod.* 17. 12.

1. *It helps us to opportunities of Prayer.* A slumbering spirit loses many seasons of Prayer, sleeps out sweet breathing-times of supplication. Where there is deep spiritual sleep, there's deep silence, a dumb spirit is there. The Sluggard

is folding his hands to reſt, when he ſhould be lifting up his heart with his hands unto God in the Heavens: If we watch not, Satan will make a prey of our praying times; the World will be ſtealing away our time and hearts too; Our praying times are precious times, our enemies envy them; and, of all times, will be interpoſing, when we are any thing diſpoſed this way; they'l loſe no time, to make us loſe our beſt times; and if they can but take us off the duty of the day, they get the day. Now a watchful Spirit will keep time with God, (in whoſe hands all our time is) who ever ſays Nay; It thinks much to loſe one meeting with him, he muſt not be put off, whatever is put by. Vigilancy helps much, as to conſtancy and frequency in prayer; an awakened heart will cry with *David*, morning, evening, and at noon; It will prevent the dawning of the Morning; and the Night watches: Such a Soul, only, can continue in prayer, and pray continually, that is continually upon its Watch.

Pſal. 55. 17.

Pſal. 119. 147, 148.

Beſides, as watchfulneſs helps to find

find out time for prayer; ſo, *to chooſe out the fitteſt*; when we are moſt at leaſure for Heaven, in the beſt poſture for prayer. As Jeſus Chriſt was much at faſting and prayer (and beſt at it) ſo he watched ſeaſons and ſecrecy for prayer; Hee's early at it, and ſolitary; And as he counſels us to pray daily, ſo he cautions us to pray duly, ſolemnly, and ſecretly. *But thou, when thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet, and when thou haſt ſhut thy door, pray to thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret*, &c. We ſhould have nothing elſe to do, when we have to do with God in Prayer. 'Tis work enough alone; and he loves to have us much alone at this work; A man that is wiſe for his Soul, will watch a finding time, in all his ſeekings; and ſpeak moſt to the Lord, when there's moſt hopes he will be ſpoke with, and he ſhall ſpeed beſt.

Mark 1. 25

Mat. 6. 6.

Pſal. 32. 6.

Now a ſleepy heart is for any time, or no time; 'Tis apt to put God off with the leaſt and laſt; when it's Spirit's low, ſtrength ſpent, affections earthly; when all out of frame, no help at it, no heart to it, no time for

it; He neither looks for Gods Spirit in prayer, nor at his own; And thus the Lord of all must be served with any thing, or nothing by a sloathful servant: whereas a vigilant soul watches Golden-Gospel-seasons, when it may offer up incense in Golden Censers. When the heart's full (as the Clouds) then to be pouring it out; when 'tis as a bottle of new Wine wanting vent; then to speak that it may be refreshed (as *Elihu* did) when the Spirit moves, when the heart is fixed, when the affections are warm, when most retired and inward. These are the heavenly breathing-times with the awakened Virgins, for this holy exercise. These are the living lively Saints holy-dayes for pure Spiritual recreation; these are their extraordinary times on earth, upon which they pray down more than ordinary blessings from Heaven.

Job. 32. 18, 19, 20.

2. *Watchfulness helps us to Importunity in prayer.* A watchful Soul is good at holding out with God, sits up with him and for him.

It will not keep silence, while God

is silent; It can take no rest, and will give the Lord no rest, till he hear in Heaven and speak to its heart; Take an awakened heart upon deep conviction, and how mightily will it cry unto the Lord, saying, Awake, awake, hear me speedily; and, How long Lord! 'Tis in great haste now, for an answer from Heaven; and the more haste the better speed in this sense. Now it cannot but wait in waiting, pray with a prayer; cry all the day: While its watch is up its soul is lifted up, that God would rejoyce the soul of his servant: Its hard at work within at this heart-duty. *Psal.* 40. 1. *Hebr.* *Jam.* 5. 14, 17. *Gr.* *Ps.* 86. 3, 4.

Now a slumbring spirit has soon done, shortest prayers are sweetest to it, It cares not for awakening the Lord, lest he should awaken it; It would be let alone, and therefore 'twill let him alone; It likes well to give the Lord rest and it self too: A sleepy heart cannot *lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees.* 'Tis the awakened soul which stretcheth forth the hand towards God, whose eyes fail with looking up; that wrestles with him, *Heb.* 12. 12.

as for life, (*Jacob-like*) and will not let him go without a blessing. Now importunity doth much with God in prayer; *Will not God avenge his Elect, that cry unto him day and night? I tell you*, sayes Christ, (who knew his Fathers heart, coming from his bosome) *he will Speedily*; assoon as may be: Fervent prayer, though long at it, loses no time; life and length in this duty will carry it at last: It will not be put off, not away till it has got an alms: it has got the skill on't, and will not leave knocking, till the door be opened; It will have its will of God (as one may say) because it would have nothing but what God will. What a great word was that from Christ to great faith and fervency in prayer: *Be it unto thee, as thou wilt*: She could wish no more, and she must have no less.

Luke 18. 1, 7, 8, 28. Gr.

Mat. 15. 28. Gr.

3. *Wathfulness helps to idoneity in prayer.* Awakened hearts are readiest to cry to the Lord, and to hear him speak: Its an instrument in tune to pray with; such an heart God himself has prepared for himself, and he will cause his

his ear to hear, and prepare of his goodneſs for it too; A Chriſtian upon his ſpiritual watch may ſay, *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* 'Tis an excellent frame of ſpirit for any ſpiritual duty, at any time. *Pſal.* 16. 17.

A ſlumbering ſpirit is moſt unfit for holy ſtrivings and ſtruglings with God; none more indiſpoſed to this ſtirring duty, or leſs affected at it; When the heart is aſleep, prayer is but a dream; tis phanſie works then, not faith; there's only a ſound of words, no ſound words; All's *but as ſounding braſs, or as a tinkling Cymbal*; it makes no muſick in Gods ear: All's to ſeek in ſuch a heart, faith, deſires, hope, *&c.* it's ever at a loſſe: All's dead in a manner here, there's no breathing almoſt; O what a diſtempered, diſtracted ſpirit is in prayer, where no watch is kept! what averſions from it, what diverſions in it? How will the heart wander up and down, and give us the ſlip, if not watched? What ſtrange withdrawings and miſgivings of ſpirit, when we draw nigh to give up our hearts to the Lord? what a croud of confuſed thoughts

thoughts in a sleepy heart? weak and low graces are soon lost in it: 'Tis such a through-fare for Satans suggestions, that Christ has little or no room there: Now a watchful spirit will be sure to shut the door against all these, that Christ may have all to himself, the heart must be kept as a closet for him and the Soul to meet in.

4. In point of Receptivity; watchfulness puts a soul into a capacity to take in much from God by prayer; as to be much at it, and to do much in it, so to get much by it; God will be ever giving to that Soul, that gives it self unto prayer. A man that is all prayer (to allude to the expression in the original) whose heart is all upon it, as *Davids*, must needs be a getting growing man; he drives so thriving a trade thoroughly; Now there's none better at it, then awakened hearts, and so none fitter to wait.

Psal. 109. 4. *Heb.*

1. *For supply and support in prayer*; Spiritual supplications cannot be carried on but by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which *Paul* reckoned so comfortably on; these sweet spices will not

Phil. 1 19.

not flow without the breathings of the holy Ghoſt; It's well known to an awakened Soul, that we cannot think a good thought of our ſelves; 'Tis only Gods good Spirit, that can teach us to indite good matter; his quicknings make our Spirits as a living Spring, to bubble up and boyl over in fervent prayer; when he touches the lips with a living coale (as one of the Seraphims did the Prophet *Iſaiah*) then our *tongues will be like the pens of a ready writer*. An experienced Chriſtian, when awake, feels at his heart; he cannot help up himſelf in prayer, and therefore he waits for the Spirit to help his infirmities; he knows not how to turn his hand or heart to the work, without an helping hand from Heaven at every turn; and therefore he waits and weeps for the Spirit to help him out, *with ſighs and groans that cannot be uttered*: and though he have no ſtrength of his own, yet he has power with God, having power from God.

Pſal. 45. 1. *Hebr.*

Iſa. 6. 6.

Rom. 8. 26. *Gr.*

2. *For ſucceſs and ſatisfaction after Prayer.* He that watches unto prayer and in it, will wait for the return of

prayer

prayer, day after day, as *Noah* did for the Dove, till it returned with an Olive leaf in its mouth: when he has *sowen in tears*, he waits for the precious fruits of a spiritual harvest, till he *reap in joy*: he looks long and longingly after his prayers and tears, with an open eye and heart; hee's ever and anon hearkening what the Lord will say, after all his speaking to him, and pleading with him by a spirit of supplication; he must hear and feel at his heart, that God hears in heaven: when he has done praying, his faith is as busie with God at his promises, as the Bee at flowers, and will not have done, till prayer comes home laden with honey. Thus poor beggars, that have the skill of waiting in prayer, and after it, get a good living by it; 'tis a good stock, that brings in great store of new and old. Now a slothful spirit has no heart at all, to look after his prayers, that had no heart in them; they die in the birth, and are still-born: how can he expect God should hear those prayers, which he scarce hears himself? They make no noise in Heaven, and

there

there can be no good newes of them on earth; they'l find Gods ear heavy, who find their hearts ſo; whereas a watchful heart may reckon much of the incomes of prayers, and ſhall have a good account of them one day.

Secondly, *Prayer helps to keep up our Watch; it cannot fall down, while Prayer is up with faith and fervency.*

1. It helps up a Chriſtians Watch, and keeps it up, as it brings in the Keeper of *Iſrael*, who neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps, to help us to watch. The prayer of faith crys loud in his ears, and awakens him, to awaken us; it followes him (as for life) to quicken up our ſpirits to this ſpiritual Watch; It has power with God, and fetches power from him, to ſtrengthen weak hands and feeble knees, in this holy duty. Prayer upon the wings of faith, will fetch down Eagles wings in a promiſe, to mount up with, in this high and heavenly exerciſe, of waiting on the Lord, and watching for him; Watch- *Iſa.* 40. 31.

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ing is hard work, and long duty; and alas, we are soon tyred out in any thing of spiritual duty; especially if any thing of difficulty in it, we are ready at every turn to lie down to rest.

Now lively prayer stirres up the Lord to stirre us up; It will set him a work at our hearts; and his heart-workings are heart-awakenings; while we are knocking at the gates of Heaven, and jogging (as it were) of Christs elbow, by stirring and strong cryes; his Spirit will be knocking at the door of our hearts; and jogging our spirits, to keep them a wake: Let a poor heart but cry in the Ears of the Lord, and it shall hear a voyce from heaven behind it, yea within it, saying, Arise my Love and come away, &c.

Psal. 121. 2. Prayer helps in watching, as it engages the Lord to watch over our watchings, without whom all our watchings would be in vain; he keeps a strict watch over his waiting servants day and night, for he neither slumbers nor sleeps. Alas, we cannot keep our souls alive, nor our heart awake; but prayer takes the Lord into the Watch-

tower

tower with us, and he ſets a guard upon our hearts, a watch before our lips, &c. Hee's a tower of ſalvation to his people, and keeps them as in a garriſon by his own power, while they are upon his Watch, and at his Work. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
The Watch muſt needs be ſafely and ſweetly kept, where Jeſus Chriſt is Captain of the Guard; we ſhould be certainly ſurprized even upon our ſpiritual Watch by thoſe ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places, who are too high and too many for us. Were we not ſet upon the Rock that is higher then we, that is higher then they, the Rock Chriſt: we ſhould be taken as naked men, even at our arms, did not the *Captain of our Salvation* watch with us, and over us. Now Chriſts waiting-ſervants are ever calling him in by the *prayer of Faith*, to keep up their Watch for them, by watching over them; their effectual prayers lay ſtrong hands upon him, to keep him with them, as the Keeper of their heads and hearts for ever. Pſal. 61. 2. 1 Sam. 23. 2. Achiſh to David.

3. Prayer helps a Chriſtian to Watch, as it brings him in to commune

with

with God, who is *glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders.* When a poor ſilly, ſinful Wretch comes to preſent himſelf before the *Holy One, who is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity.* How will the ſerious thoughts of the tranſcendent Majeſty, and reſplendent purity of *Jehovah* awaken him? *will not his excellency make* him *afraid, and his dread fall upon* him? When *Abraham* drew near to commune with the Lord, what awakened poſture does he appear in? *Behold* (ſayes he) *I have taken upon me to ſpeak to the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes. Oh let not the Lord be angry,* &c. When a Child of God finds in his heart to plead with his Father in Heaven, he firſt pleads with himſelf in theſe or the like words; *Wherewithal ſhall I appear before the Lord, or bow my ſelf to the mighty God of* Jacob? Awake, O my ſoul, awake, and offer not the dead, the lame, and the ſick, in ſacrifice to the living God: Hee's *a great King, and his Name is dreadful:* And as a gracious ſpirit communes with its own heart, before it commune with him that

Job. 13. 11.

Gen. 18. 27.

Mic. 6. 9.

Mal. 1. 14.

fryes

tryes the heart; ſo the Lord communes with it in & after prayer: now the voyce of the Lord is a glorious voyce, which ſhakes the Cedars; and will it not then ſhake a bruiſed reed, and make it tremble at his Word? A broken heart that can ſpeak its mind freely and feelingly to the Lord, and hears him ſpeaking home to his heart, muſt needs be effectually awakened; ſuch heavenly intercourſe maintained by a ſpirit of prayer, will keep up a Chriſtians ſpirit in a watchful frame, till it go up to God that gave it.

4. Prayer helps exceedingly at this heart-watch, as it is marvellouſly heart-affecting: In fervent prayer, how does the ſoftned heart melt in godly ſorrow, (as ſnow before the Sun, or wax by the fire?) mourning over the Lord and after him? how does the thirſting ſoul pant and breathe, and break with longings after the living God, as a thirſty land? how are the affections carried up towards heaven, in a pure flame of Divine life and love, aſcending as pillars of perfumed ſmoke? And will not ſuch unconceiveable

Soul-ſtirrings and ſtrugglings as theſe awaken the heart? Sure there is a mighty ſpirit of activity goes forth in this Saints-exerciſe, when performed in the power of the holy Spirit, which will prevent heart-benumming ſecurity; when a man of God wraſtles with the Almighty in his might as a Gyant refreſhed with Wine; what heart-raiſing and ſtrowſing work muſt there needs be (think ye)? 'Tis too buſie a time this, to ſleep in, when an immortal ſoul is working, as for life, with the ever-living God, about the things of Eternity.

A double ground in the Text, why we ſhould double our duty in watching and praying.

Firſt, Becauſe we are expoſed to temptation, if we do not Watch and Pray; For,

1. We provoke the Lord to tempt us, while we tempt him by neglect of theſe Goſpel-Duties, of his own appointment; as,

1. To lead us into temptation, when we will not follow the leading and guidance of his Holy Spirit and Word: 'Tis that which Jeſus Chriſt, in tenderneſs to our weak, wandering ſpirits, would have daily upon our hearts in prayer, to beſeech our Father, not to lead us into temptation.

'Tis true, as the Spirit of Truth teſtifies, that *God cannot be tempted to evil, neither tempteth he any man.* He is infinitely holy and righteous, and cannot tempt any to ſin and unrighteouſneſs. He is the chief good, and cannot lead any into any evil temptation, or temptation to evil. And he is unchangeably and eternally holy, and cannot poſſibly be tempted to unholineſs: the juſt Lord will, can do, nothing that is unjuſt, no iniquity.

Yet the Lord may be ſaid in his own ſenſe, to lead us into temptation, for himſelf hath ſaid it. As,

1. *By way of Probation.* When he tryes us like gold i'th fire, as he did *Job.* When he leads us into the Wilderneſs, to prove us, as he did *Iſrael* of old; when we fall into the hands of

God, as *David* and his Servants did. And though we are to *account it all joy*
Jam. 1.2. *when we fall into manifold temptations; for as the temptations and sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolations*
2 Cor. 1.5. *also will abound by Christ*; 'tis his peculiar method (with which his secret ones are well acquainted) to bring good out of evil, and sweet out of bitter; yet it is upon the account of his sympathy with us in sufferings, and sanctifying them to us, by keeping up the spiritual exercise of watching and prayer, while we are exercised therewith; otherwise, as afflictions are never joyous in themselves, so they will be ever grievous to those, who have grieved the holy Spirit, by laying aside their spiritual watchfulness and prayer. Those sufferings must needs be full of vexation and perplexity, which find us under presumption and security; For,

First, What bitterness will it be to the soul, when awakened in a day of adversity, that it slept and slumbered out its dayes of prosperity; that which was then a bed of ease to the flesh,

will

will be now a bed of thorns to the ſpirit. There cannot chuſe but be much heart-aking, under heart-awakening tryals, to all ſlumbring Virgins; and that is the pain of all pains, the ſharpeſt ſting in ſufferings; ſad thoughts of ſinful ſlumberings will break ones ſleep; falſe reſts will fearfully diſquiet us, when we find them out, or they us in the day of calamity. Affliction will be a root of bitterneſs bearing gall and worm-wood at ſuch a time; Oh what a heavy burthen has the careleſs neglect of watching and praying been, to ſome ſlumbring Chriſtians in our dayes, who have lived at eaſe in Zion, while ſhe has been in pain traveling to be delivered? How have they *mourned like Doves, and chattered as a Crane, or Swallow*, for want of that Spirit of grace and ſupplication, which they had ſo long reſtrained, and ſo much extinguiſhed, under a ſpiritual Lethargie? How have their hearts been ready to dye within them, like *Nabals*, for want of life in, and love to, thoſe holy duties, wherein ſometimes they had been lively and full of affection?

How will the hearts of all the ſlumbering Virgins ſmite them one day, when diſtreſs ſhall come upon them, as ſorrow upon a woman in travel? will they not then weep out their ſleepy eyes, and ſigh out their ſluggiſh ſpirits, crying, Ah we fools, that had a prize in our hands, and no hearts to uſe it? We have loſt many a good day, trifling out choice breathing times, in the ſight of the Sun; and now the night is come upon us, and we cannot work: Alas, alas, for thoſe dayes of the Son Man; *Oh that it were with us as in the monthes of old, when the Candle of the Lord ſhined upon our heads*, &c. What ſlothful ſervants have we been, hiding our Maſters Talent in a Napkin, when we ſhould have *miniſtred one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God?* And now the ruſt of them witneſſeth againſt us, as the worldings gold and ſilver. We have ſhut our ears and hearts againſt the Lord and his good Word; and now the Word of the Lord is againſt us. We have ſlighted the ſweet counſel and comforts of the holy Spirit, and

Job 29. 2, 3.

1 *Pet.* 4. 10.

and now we feel its ſharp convictions: We would not hear the checks of Conſcience, and now we muſt hear its chidings. Oh the ſting and ſmart of ſelf-condemning Conſcience, when it is once awakened out of ſelf-pleaſing, and ſelf-eaſing ſecurity, by the ſcourging rod of the Almighty.

Secondly, what averſeneſs and frowardneſs, will fill thy ſpirit in ſad hours, who haſt ſinfully ſlipt and ſlept out ſo many good ones? When thou feeleſt thy ſufferings weighty, and thy ſhoulders weak; thy preſſures great, and thy patience ſmall, thy body languiſhing, thy ſoul fainting, thy faith failing; How will thy Spirit be diſtempered, and thy peace diſturbed; thy heart will be ready to *fret againſt the Lord*; thou'lt be angry as *Jonah, even to the death*; to ſee death looking thee in the face, when thou leaſt looked for it; and the evil day nearеſt, when thou putteſt it fartheſt from thee; and now thy ſlumbrings and wanderings will be ſet in order before thee, and thou haſt neither ſet thy houſe or heart in order before the Lord; Pro. 19. 3.

and now the Judge ſtandeth at the door, to call thee to an account, and thou haſt not made up thy reckonings for many a day; thy time miſpent, thy ſtock ſpent; thy experiences loſt, thy evidence to ſeek; O how diſcontented will thy diſappointed heart be at ſuch a day? Thou haſt long neglected the ruling of thy own ſpirit, and now 'twill be too unruly for thee, as a wild bull in a net; how apt wilt thou be to kick againſt the pricks (*Ephraim*-like) as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke. An heart not watcht over, will be much out of frame for doing well, much more for ſuffering. When the weight of affliction falls upon a lazy, lame ſpirit; what haltings will be diſcovered, and uneven carriage under the rod?

2. *By way of Permiſſion.* As the Lord may be ſaid to lead us into temptation by way of Probation, when he takes us into his own hand; ſo by way of *conceſſion*, when he takes off his own hand; and ſuffers Satan to put forth his hand againſt us. 'Tis true, the evil one is alwayes limited by the Holy One,

One, that he cannot do his worſt; or elſe he would play the Devil indeed: he's under Divine reſtraint (and in a Priſon, as it were) when moſt at liberty; this ſtrong man armed is reſerved in chains by a ſtronger than he; Yet his heart is ſet upon the ſervants of God, (as 'twas upon *Job*) with as much ill will as it can hold, (though through mercy, he cannot have his will on them) The roaring Lyon gapes with open mouth to ſwallow them up. How earneſtly did he deſire to fift the Diſciples of Chriſt? he was greedy of ſuch a prey as this: and if the Lord did not put a hook in the noſtrils of this Leviathan, what a piercing Serpent would he be? How ready was the evil ſpirit to offer his ſervice, to be a lying ſpirit in the mouth of the Prophets? He would fain be deceiving, that he might be deſtroying. Now if we neglect our ſpiritual Watch, we grieve the Spirit, and tempt him to leave us to the temptations of the evil ſpirit, who will be ever grieveing and vexing our ſpirits, and doing us all the miſchief he can, and 'tis much

Job. 1. 8. *Hebr.*

Luke 22. 31. *Gr.*

Iſa. 27. 1.

1 *Kings* 22. 22.

much he can do with Gods leave: if the Lord take away the hedge, this wild Boar will be in upon us, and root up all.

2. We tempt the Lord to tempt us, when we give over watching and praying, by leaving us in temptation, as by leading us into it; and that's a very Sad Case.

As, 1. By withdrawing himself and his holy Spirit from us, when we are under tryals: And this must needs be a dark time, when God covers us with a Cloud in his anger, and covers himself as with a Cloud too. What a terrible Eclipse will that be, when the light of his Countenance is withheld, in a day of darkness and gloominess? This indeed is the burthen of all afflictions, and lyes heaviest upon honest hearts. This is plain to see in the several perplexed cases and distressed conditions of *Job*, *Heman*, *David*, &c. under variety of afflictions and temptations. The hiding of Gods face was the sorest trouble, the saddest tryal; this struck deepest into their hearts, and made their faces gather paleness:

Job 13. 21. *Ps.* 88 14. *Psa.* 13. 1. & 30. 7.

how

now were their ſpirits drunk up with the *terrours of the Almighty*? Now 'tis moſt righteous with the Lord, to leave us in a day of adverſity, when we leave him in dayes of proſperity; to leave us at a loſs in our ſtraits, when we leave and loſe him in liberty. He will withdraw from us, when evill drawes near, if we have withdrawn and wandred from him, when he drew near to do us good: He will turn his back upon them in times of calamity, who have given him the back and not the face in times of tranquillity.

2. By delivering us up to our ſelves and our own ſpirits. When Gods people would have none of Him, *He gave them up to their own hearts luſts*; they would not own the Lord, and be his ſervants; and he leaves them to be ſlaves to their own luſts, lording it over them. Ah, when a people grow weary of God, have done with him as to Watching in prayer, and let him alone, coming ſeldom at him; hee'l be a ſtranger to them, and leave them alone, as he did *Ephraim*: *Hee's joyned*

Pſa. 81. 11, 12.

Hoſ. 4. 17, 18.

to

to Idols, let him alone, ſayes God; he will not joyn himſelf to the Lord, and the Lord will have nothing to do with him, but leave him to himſelf, and to his Idols; and now all goes ill with poor *Ephraim*: his drink is ſowr, or is gone, (as in the Hebr.) all is gone when God is gone; and he commits whoredom continually; all ſours on his hands & in his heart too. Ah, when we ſlight the Lord, and ſlumber in his ſight; he will let us ſlip out of his hands, and then (as a Bowl falling out of the hand, down a ſteep hill) we follow the Byaſs of our own corrupt hearts, and run headlong without ſtop or ſtay Hellward. 'Tis not to ſay, How fearfully and ſhamefully the beſt of men will leave the Lord and loſe themſelves, when left to themſelves? We have remarkable proofs of this in thoſe precious ſervants of the Lord of old, *David*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, &c. they made themſelves vile; yea even as beaſts before him, when they were left to themſelves? And we have many lamentable inſtances in our dayes, of ſuch, who looked like the ſheep coming up from the

the waſhing, clean eſcaped from the pollutions of the world, yet have *turned like the dog to the vomit, and as the ſow that was waſhed to the wallowing in the mire*; Would it ever have entred into their hearts that they ſhould ever have ſo fowly defiled their garments, which ſeemed to have been waſhed ſo fair in the blood of the Lamb? would they not have ſaid (with *Hazael*) *are we as dogs, that we ſhould do ſuch things?* Oh yes, when a people are delivered up to themſelves, they will be readie to lay with thoſe, (of whom the Lord complaines) *We are delivered up to do all theſe abominations?* If we leave the Lord and his watch and work, we tempt him to leave us in temptation to our own hearts; and then that plague will be upon them, (which fell upon the heart of *Pharoah*) which was worſe to him then all the plagues of *Egypt*; and we ſhall even harden our ſelves againſt the Lord.

2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

2 King. 8. 13.

Jer. 7. 10.

Exod. 9. 14.

2. We tempt the Devil, that tempter, to tempt us, when we give over watching and praying; He watches our ſlumbrings, and lies at catch for us, when

when he may take us napping; when we have a mind to fall asleep upon a bed of carnal securitie, the Devil will make our bed for us, and lie down softly by us too: when we give over Gods work, we are out of his way; and lie sleeping in Satans walks, and that a dry Tinder to his fierie Darts; And there come but a spark from Hell, and fall upon our hearts, it takes presently: when we put out the light and fall to sleep, we give him room and time for his works of darkness; he drives his wicked trade most and best i'th dark: *The eye of* this Arch-*thiefe waiteth for the twilight, when no eyes may see him*: he looks at us most with his envious eyes, when our eyes are shut, and the shadows of spiritual darkness are upon us; and how easily may he steal away our hearts, and the heavenly treasure out of them, at such a time as *David* did *Sauls* spear from his bolster, when a deep sleep was upon him. And indeed this thief in the night (to allude still to that place in *John*) would rob us of all our Jewels, when a dead sleep is upon us, did not our faithful keeper watch

Job 24. 14.15.

1 Sam. 26. 12.

watch him, and watch over us: Oh what danger are we in every hour, to become a prey to this roaring Lion, while we lie ſleeping at his feet? the fowles of the ayr have the greateſt advantage againſt us that may be, whilſt vve lie as ſilly doves, heartleſs and ſpiritleſs before them. And is not this a very foule buſineſs, to ſet the Devil on work to do us miſchief, vvho vvill hurt us and hinder us all he can, and that by neglectiug our Maſters buſineſs, vvho has done us good and no evil, all our dayes.

3. We tempt our own luſts to tempt us, vvhen vve lay aſide our ſpiritual watch; vve entice them to entice and allure us; And indeed here lies the great temptation within our own hearts *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſts, and enticed; and ſin when it is conceived bringeth forth death*: The privy ſore in the heart, the deadly wound; the womb that conceives luſt, ſin, death. Here the Devil layes his train of powder, and vvere there no fire of luſt there, he could never blow us up; temptations vvithout could Jam. 1. 14, 15.

could take no hold, if there were no corruption within; Satan set upon Jesus Christ with varietie of temptations, but could find nothing in him, and so could do nothing against him: The Prince of this world, was ever warring against the Prince of peace, but had no power against him, because he had no party within him. Nay the subtle Serpent with all his power and policy could not prevail at all, no not once, against the weakest, simplest Saint, if sin did not take his part. Tis the party within betraies us; Tis the worst enemy, that within; it opens the door to our enemies without, yea to the worst of them, or they could not get within us. Now when we are fallen into a dead sleep, and have lost the life of prayer; our lusts will swarm about us, as flies about a dead carcase: Sins not watched over, will get head and heart whilst we indulge our selves saying, Soul take thine ease; we pamper our sins and make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Spiritual watching and prayer will starve our lusts, eat out their very hearts, but carnal

Job 24. 14, 15.

carnal ſlumbrings and ſleepings feed them.

While prayer is kept up in power, ſin is kept dovvn and over-povvered; if our ſins do not ſtop our mouths, nor ſtraiten our hearts in prayer, our prayers will cry them down, and ſtob them at heart, when our hearts are lift up powerfully in prayer; our heart-ſins, as pride, paſſion, unbelief, *&c.* will come down wonderfully (as the *Amalakites* fell, while *Moſes* lift up his hands) O while we continue wreſtling with God by fervent prayer, we may wreſtle with *ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places*, and that to victory; our ſouls ſhall *tread down ſtrength* (to uſe *Deborahs* expreſſion in her tryumphant Song), while they are lift up, and poured out in prayer, for the help that is laid upon that One that is mighty. Whereas, if our hands be let down, and our hearts fall, our corruptions will get up and carry it againſt us with a ſtrong hand: if we be not watchful and prayerful, ſin will grow exceeding ſinful: *If we reſtrain Prayer*

Judg. 5. 21.

Job 15.

before God, our mouths will utter iniquity; (as *Eliphaz* said to *Job*) who seems to plead thus with him; How comest thou to be so distempered in spirit, so vain and distracted in speech, if prayer were not restrained? Fervent, constant Prayer would bring the heart into a good tune and temper, aud keep it so.

4. When vve neglect our Spiritual Watch, vve lie naked to temptations without, as to corruptions within; the creatures are full of snares, and we shall be catched in them at every turn, if a spirit of slumber be upon us. The love of the World is connatural to us, bred in the bone, most suitable to flesh and blood; our hearts hang downward, and move towards earth and earthly things, as a stone to the Center; and 'tis impossible to keep them up vvithout Watching and Prayer. Indeed, while we keep close to God by Faith in Prayer, we keep him close to us; and then the World may not interpose, must not be closed with upon any terms; *For greater is he*

1 *Joh.* 4. 4.

that

that is in us, then he that is in the world. And while we Watch and Pray, our ſpiritual weapons will be *mighty through God, to bring down all the ſtrong holds of the god of this world.*

Luther was one of the moſt watchful ſpirits in prayer, (we read of) and he ſpeaks of one of the higheſt experiences that we ſhall meet with; That he was never tempted to Covetouſneſs; there was no fiſhing for his ſpirit with golden baits, which was carried ſo high above the world in Faith and Prayer.

But alas, Chriſtians now adayes find the world a very great temptation, a world of temptations in it. How is the Moon got up to the heart; in this our age, that uſed to be under foot, to ſuch as are cloathed with the Sun? Oh what hoarding up treaſure on earth, by ſuch as ſeemed to be heirs of Heaven, as if their Heaven were upon earth, and their hearts too. *Rev.* 12. 2.

How unbecoming is this to thoſe that are born from above, to live be-

neath themſelves: that ever ſo noble ſpirits of the blood-Royal, ſhould be ſo embaſed; and precious Sons and Daughters of *Zion*, who were comparable to fine Gold, ſhould (in this ſenſe) become as earthen pitchers? How contrary is this to thoſe heavenly principles of faith and love, which ſhould carry us as upon Eagles wings above the world towards heaven? Oh where is the love of the Father, where there is ſo much love of the World? Have you ever taſted of the powers of the World to come, who are thus brought under the power of the creature? What, ſhall the Children of the Kingdome look no further, live no higher than the Kingdoms of this World? What, called out of the World, and at the Worlds call too! Theſe things could never be, if watching and prayer had been kept up all this while with life and power; 'Twere not poſſible the World ſhould ſteal upon the hearts of God's People thus, and ſteal them away too, were they not aſleep: Now when Prayer's down

down, and the World up, what a downfal will there be? *They fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many hurtful and fooliſh luſts, which drown men in perdition.* Oh what a root of Evill ſprings up, where the World takes deep root! How do they *pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows,* and choak the precious ſeeds of Grace with theſe thorns! And when the heart is over-charged with the inordinate love of this preſent World; This Soul-benumming Lethargy of carnal ſecurity will overſpread it, that we ſhall not feel this ſin within us, when it is even all over us; what ſenſe can vve have of our living by Senſe, while Faith lies dead? The love of the World vvill grow inſenſibly upon us, if it can but lull us aſleep in its arms. 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10.

Secondly, Becauſe we ſhall be indiſpoſed to make any oppoſition, in an hour of temptation, if we do not Watch and Pray; our temptations will grow ſtronger, and we weaker

in Spirit every day then other; they will by as Gyants, and we as Grashoppers, (to use the expression of the Spies). And alas, as we are, so is our strength (as *Gideon* said of *Jether*) at the best but weakness; and our spiritual enemies will gather up their strength to take the advantage of us, when and where we are weakest; How easily may they make a prey of us, coming upon us when we are sore, as *Simeon* and *Levi* did upon the Males? especially if we consider,

Gen. 34. 25.

1. That the Strength of *Israel* has secretly withdrawn Himself from his People, while their hearts have been asleep, and now their Defence is departed from them, and they are as bread to the devouring mouth of the hungry Lion, who never had a better stomack to them. *Sampson*, who was so strong in the strength of God, was as weak as another man when the Lord departed from him; the Philistines may now bind him as they please, put out his eyes, and make him grind in the Prison-house! Ah, since the

Num. 14. 9.

Judg. 16. 19, 20.

the Lord has turned his back upon a backſliding generation; how are the ſtrong become as Tow, and they that had the excellency of dignity and ſtrength, are as unſtable as the water? how miſerable are they ſwallowedup of temptations on every ſide? how eaſily led captive by their corruptions at every turn? And though they ſhake themſelves ſometimes (as *Samſon* did) and think to reſiſt them as at other times; alas, they cannot do it, for their ſtrength is departed from them.

2. That the Lord hath left them to themſelves, who have laid him aſide and left off watching and prayer; Now what can ſuch naked men do in an hour of Temptation, when they meet with the ſtrong man armed? muſt they not needs be ſpiritleſs, like *Saul* in the day of diſtreſs, when he was left to his own Spirit, and had no ſtrength in him? What a pittiful forlorn creature is that man whom God has given over, and given up to himſelf; even like a lamb in a large place,

1 Sam. 28. 20.

Hoſ. 4. 16.

as back-sliding *Israel!* what more distitute, and distressed, where no Shepherd, no flock? how will it wander and lose it self? The best of men in such a case are exposed to the worst of evils; when *David*, a man after Gods own heart, was trusted but a while with his own heart, how shamefully it deceived him and defiled him? who would ever have thought that Murders and Adulteries should have proceeded out of such a heart as his? When *Solomon*, who was so beloved of his God, was given up to himself, how strangely was his heart changed within him, and turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, even to strange gods, and strange wives! The wisest of men, when left to his own wisdom, appears as one of the fools in Israel, and whither does his shame go? And good *Hezekiah*, when the Lord left him, to try him, to know all that was in his heart; what pride of heart does he discover; (though he had been so lately and so deeply humbled)? And though

Nehem. 13.26.

1 King. 11. 8.

2 Chron. 32.31.

though the Lord had newly emptied all worldly glory before his eyes; Yet he could not keep his eyes and heart off of the houſe of his precious things, &c. but glories in ſhewing all the treaſures that were found there; when he ſhould have glorified God, and ſhewed forth his wonders, in bringing the Sun of his life back, and the ſhadow upon the Dyal of *Ahaz*, &c. 2 King. 20. 13. Iſa. 38.

Yea, bleſſed *Peter*, an holy Appoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, when he truſted to his own ſtrength, and boldly profeſſed above the rate of the reſt of the Diſciples, ſaying, *Though all men ſhall be offtnded becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended; and though I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* When Chriſt truſts him with himſelf and his own ſtrength, (but for a little ſeaſon) how fowly he ſhews his weakneſs, and ſhames himſelf; and very ſinfully offendes him more then they all, by being ſo ſhameſully offended becauſe of him; denying before them all, that he knew his Maſter, upon the word of a damſel that ſaid, *Thou waſt with* Matt. 26. 33, 35.

Jeſus,

Jesus. And the Holy Ghost sets a brand of Cowardize upon this self-confiding Champion; leaving this upon record to all Ages (to shake and shame all the Lords people out of themselves), that when another Maid
Mat. 26. 71. said, *This fellow was with Jesus, he denied with an oath, I know not the man.* Would any of the Disciples have ever believed such a thiug as this of *Peter?* or he, of himself? that a cursed oath should have ever been found within his blessed lips, and that to deny his Lord and Master, whose lips had so oft blessed him; that he should so desperately disown him with his mouth, whom he owned, honoured, and loved so dearly at his heart.

Oh how have the mighty fallen, how have the mighty fallen, when they have been left to themselves, and have fallen into their own hands! Such remarkable examples as these taken into our serious consideration, may happily (if the Lord strike in with them) awaken some sleepy hearts from a presumptuous self-ful security, to a religi-

ous

ous watchful jealouſie; that they who think they ſtand, may take heed leſt they fall; as certainly they ſhall, (though they ſeem to be as pillars, as *Peter* did) if they ſtand upon their own legs, and not upon his, that are *as Pillars of Marble ſet upon ſockets of fine Gold.* Cant. 5. 15.

Upon this double Account, that they are ſo expoſed to Temptation, and ſo indiſpoſed to oppoſition, who do not watch and pray: Let me call for double diligence in the Name of the Lord to this double Duty.

Firſt, double your Watch; Ob watch, watch,

1. Over your own Hearts; for they are moſt deceitful, and the Deceiver lies moſt at catch there: the ſubtil Serpent he knowes where our guile lies, Jer. 17. 9.

lies, which he would willingly make use of, to beguile us with. 'Tis his
Gen. 3. 15. Commission, only to bruise the heel; but 'tis his covetous ambition to break into the heart. How he watches day and night, works without weariness, and winds about every way, to surprize this Royal Fort of the King of Glory; if he carry that, he commands all, and will lead us captive at his will; if he can but get his head into our hearts, and keep his hand upon this great wheel, he has his hearts desire, & will turn all about with it. Oh therefore lay to heart that blessed Counsel of
Prov. 4. 23 our great heart-keeper; *Keep thy heart above all keeping*, (so the Hebrew has it) *for out of it are the issues of life.* 'Tis matter of life and death, this; 'Tis as much as thy life is worth, to watch the heart well; and not to watch it, is death. The Devil knows, if there be any good treasure within thee, it is laid up in thine heart; and he would fain have the key of this Cabinet, to rob thee of thy Jewels: If he can but corrupt this fountain, all

the

the ſtreams will be filthy; out of it will proceed the worſt of Evils, when it becomes the worſt part, which ſhould be the beſt.

The Father of ſpirits doubles his Charge upon our ſpirits; The Lord God of Iſrael ſaith, Take heed to your ſpirit, take heed to your ſpirit. Here the unclean ſpirits muſter up their Forces, and therefore here muſt our main Guard be; Watch but the heart ſo, as to keep him out there, and the Devil out of your heart, hee'l deſpair of you. *Mal.* 2. 15, 16.

2. Watch the good Spirit of God, in all its motions, impreſſions, convictions, allurings, comfortings, &c. as ever you would eſcape the temptations and deluſions of the evil ſpirit: and therefore,

Firſt, Watch the good Spirit, to welcome him; make much of his ſweet breathings, there's much life and love in them. If the Spirit come to convince you, ſaying, (as *Nathan* did to *David*) *Thou art the man*; ſay, *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* Be ready to hear of

of that ear, though he ſpeak ſuch things as make it tingle, as you love the peace of your own ſpirits. If he come as a Spirit of glory and power to ſubdue your iniquities, to cut off your right hand, &c. with his two-edged ſword; Oh ſay, Let him go on and proſper, till he have ſlain his thouſands, &c. and made all his enemies become his footſtool. If he come to reſt as a Dove upon you, to meeken and ſweeten your Spirits; Oh put forth your hands to take him (as *Noah* did the Dove with the Olive-leafe); make both much of, and ſet much by the good Spirit and Word of God, and the evil Spirit will not be able to do you much hurt. Oh prize the gracious manuductions of this faithful guide at an high rate, and be as glad of his heavenly conduct, as the wiſe men were to ſee the Star that pointed out Chriſt to them, they rejoyced with exceeding great joy. Lie as even as you can under his celeſtial influences, and ſweet diſtillings of the precious dews of grace and peace; Attend his glorious miniſtration all along,

Matth 2. 10.

long; let him have his whole will upon you, and do his work wholly and fully within you; ſay him not Nay in any thing, and he will work mightily within you, and witneſs manifeſtly to you.

2. Watch the workings and witneſſings of the Holy Spirit, ſo as you may not hinder him when he comes to help you, nor grieve him when he comes to comfort you; take heed of tempting him, who only can help you againſt the Tempter; O ſhut not out his glorious Light for all the glory of the World; impriſon not any of his precious Truths for all the ſpecious Liberties under the Sun; reſiſt not the ſtirring power of his Grace upon you, when he's ſhaking the powers of darkneſs within you; refuſe not the free and familiar tenders of his heart-renewing and reviving love, for thouſands of Gold and Silver; Loſe not willingly one ſyllable of the ſecret whiſperings of this meſſenger of peace, leſt he vvithdraw his light, love, power and peace, and leave you to the power

of

of Satan, and he lead you into Priſon, and keep you in darkneſs. Alas, alas, we have given the greateſt occaſion and advantage, to ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places, to tempt, vex, diſturb, and divide us, by tempting, vexing, and quenching the holy Spirit, as ever any in the World have done; And, are not now the ſhadows of the evening upon us, for ſlighting his goings forth as the morning? How ſtrangely have the lying Spirits deceived us, ſince the Spirit of Truth has been rejected, and the Truths of the Spirit? What a thick, black, dark hour of temptation is come upon us ſince we have refuſed the clear Counſel and pure Comforts of the holy-Ghoſt, in the day of his gracious Viſitation; What ſtrong deluſions and ſtrange declinings to the right-hand or the left, ſince we have forſaken the Guide of our ſpirits!

3. Watch your ſpiritual enemies: They watch us, as Satan did Chriſt. *Luk.* 4.13. When the Tempter is gone, and his temptation ſeems to be quite over, he does but watch another ſeaſon, and there-

therefore we muſt watch in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; as *Nehemiah* and the people of God with him, did with *Sanballat* and the enemies of God, they prayed and ſet a watch day and night; the enemy was very wroth, and they were very watchful; a ſword in one hand, when at work with the other: So ſhould we at this day; watch at the Lords work; watch and pray, watch and hear, watch and ſpeak, *&c.* 'Tis very ſeaſonable that counſel of the mighty Counſellour: *Take heed no man deceive you, for many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and deceive many.* Oh how much are we concern'd in that bleſſed caution, upon whom the ends of the world are come! How affectionate and importunate was *Paul*, the aged and experienced, in warning the people night and day, and that with tears, to beware of ſuch as ſhould ſeek to withdraw them from the Goſpel of Chriſt! Do not ſpiritual dangers multiply upon us every day, whiles we are under a ſpirit of ſlumbring ſecurity; from our ſoul-ene-

Nehem. 4. 7, 8, 9.

Mat. 24. 4, 5, 11, 24, 25.

mies, and that on every ſide; Oh what need of the whole Armour of God, on the right hand and on the left; what need of a diligent ſpiritual watch, over our heads and hearts, words and ways, teachings and hearings! Oh gather up your ſpiritual forces everyday, & call in auxiliaries from Heaven, & follow the Captain of your Salvation, Watching and Praying (as the Armour-bearer did *Jonathan*, climbing upon hands and feet) contend earneſtly for the faith which was once given to the Saints; and as you
1 *Pet.* 1. 5. are fighting the good fight of faith, be ever looking up to Jeſus, and you ſhall be kept as in a Garriſon (ſo the word imports) by his power, through faith unto ſalvation.

4. Watch over, and for one another for good, in an evil time; 'tis very ſeaſonable to be knocking at one anothers doors, and jogging at each others elbows in the ſpirit of meekneſs, to keep as many awake as you can, in this ſlumbring time, through the good hand of God upon you; and ſurely

they

they, whoſe hearts are awakened in ſuch a day as this, by the Lords ſpeaking from heaven to them, cannot keep ſilence, but muſt be ſpeaking to their brethren in the name of the Lord ſaying, *awake, awake.* As our hearts ſhould dwell much upon awakening meditations, ſo our mouths ſhould be filled with awakening ſalutations and exhortations, when we meet with the ſervants of Chriſt, as it was with the lively Chriſtians in the primitive times) ſaying, *Behold he comes like a thief*; and, *The Judge ſtandeth at the door*; and the like: When ſo many watch one anothers haltings; let us watch to be helpers of one anothers faith and joy, by provoking one another to Watching and Prayer; when many fellow-ſervants are ſmiting one another with words of violence and verulency, let us ſmite one another with words of truth and ſoberneſs: and the deeper they pierce the heart in the ſpirit of Love, the better: could we hit one another o'th heart-vein, 'twould be a mercy. Oh that the righteous

would thus ſmite one another, with gracious words of reproof, to reſtore one another, and all in much mutual ſoul-love, what a kindneſs would this be? Such precious oyntments would not break the head, but mollifie and meeken the heart. Such wounds would be welcome from the hand of a friend. Alas, we complain every where of the Saints ſlumbring, wandring, and wantonneſs; 'twere better we turned our complaints inward, and left them upon our ſelves, that we do not ſtir up one another to Watching and Prayer; we do but bear one another as burthens upon our ſpirits, when we ſhould bear one anothers burthens, and help at a dead lift, as with one ſhoulder; we ſee poor Chriſtians in a dead ſleep on every hand, and we lie dying by them, but who calls upon them, to be
Rev. 3.2. watchful, and ſtrengthen the things that are ready to die? How many have our eyes beheld lying as a man
Pro. 23.34 aſleep upon the top of a Maſt, and floods of temptations under them too, ready to ſwallow them up; bu thow

few

few have we laboured to awaken to this day? may we not reflect upon our ſelves in the words of *Abſolom* to *Huſhai*: Is this our kindneſs to our friends? Is this nothing to you, all ye that paſs by, do you not take notice how many fooliſh Virgins lye ſlumbring and languiſhing upon beds of ſenſuality and ſecurity, and the houſe ready to be ſet on fire over their heads; and do you take no care to awaken them? would it not pity your very heart, to ſee the flames ſeize upon them, while they are aſleep? How long has the keeper of Iſrael watched over them, and kept them as the apple of his eye, notwithſtanding all their ſlumbrings and wandrings; and does he not expect (think you) that you ſhould be your brethrens keeper for his ſake, and cry unto them in all haſte to prepare to meet him, leſt he withdraw the wing of his protection from them, and leave them naked; if you ſee your brethren ſleeping, ſtarving, dying, and ſhut up the bowels of your compaſſions from them in ſuch

2 *Sam.* 16, 17.

a caſe, how dwels the love of God in you? And if you ſay, 'tis not in mans power to awaken anothers heart, who cannot awaken his own; can a man raiſe the dead? 'Tis true, the low voyce of a weak man can never make thoſe hearts hear, which can ſleep under the loud thunderings of Heaven; why but can you weep over them, as the *Jews* did over *Lazarus* in his grave? can you feelingly ſigh over them, ſaying, Can theſe drie bones live? Who ſhall roul away the ſtone, and open their graves? why he that is the Reſurrection and the Life, can awaken them out of the deepeſt ſleep, and quicken them with a word of his mouth; If Jeſus will but groan in Spirit with you, and ſay, Awake, ariſe, come forth; the dead ſhall hear his voyce and live. You cannot lift up their ſleepy hearts, no alas, they are too heavy for you; but cannot you lift up a prayer for them? If any man ſee his brother ſin a ſin not unto death, he ſhall ask, and he ſhall give him life; What high encouragement is here to

1 Joh. 5. 16.

pray-

praying-ſouls to lift up their voice on high, for ſuch as are ſinning and ſleeping in ſin almoſt to death; Oh then if the Spirit of prayer were raiſed again from the dead (as one may ſay) what bleſſed hopes would there be of a ſpiritual reſurrection, to many poor hearts, that are even dead and buried in the grave of ſecuritie.

Secondly, double your duty of Prayer; Pray, Pray,

1. For a plentiful and powerful effuſion of the Holy Spirit to counſel and comfort our fooliſh fainting ſpirit in this hour of temptation. 'Tis ſad to behold, ſince we have cauſed the good Spirit to withdraw his gracious influences, how the glory is departed in a great meaſure from Churches, Ordinances, Communions, &c. in moſt places; may we not ſadly ſigh out that heart-breaking word *Ichabod*, and ſay, Where is the glory; how many choiſe Gardens of the Saints are withered, ſince the Lord

has withheld the ſpiritual dewes of Heaven! How thin and lean is *Jabob* become, and waxen pale, ſince a famine of the Spirit has been amongſt us! How ſpiritleſs, faithleſs, heartleſs, fruitleſs, loveleſs are moſt Chriſtians grown, ſince we have ſlumbred and ſinn'd away the Spirit of faith, life, love, power, *&c.* How is the Gold become dim, the fine Gold changed, now he that has the ſeven Spirits is turned aſide from the Golden Candleſticks? Oh it is high time then, to beg as for life, that the Spirit would come down as floods upon the dry ground, that the Churches may be as watred Gardens, and the Saints may grow up as Willows by the Water-Courſes. Oh let all the awakened ſervants of Chriſt cry, as with one heart and mouth, *Awake O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon the Gardens, that the Spices thereof may flow out; that our Beloved may come into his Garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.* Oh when, when ſhall a precious box of Oyntment be broken

Cant. 4. 16.

over

over us, to fill our hearts with its ſavour? Oh when will the Spirit come down amongſt us as a Refiners fire, or Fullers ſope, to purifie us as Gold and Silver, that we may offer up pure offerings of righteouſneſs, which may be pleaſant to the Lord, as in the dayes of old? Oh that we could wait in the Spirit (as old *Simeon* did for the conſolation of *Iſrael*) for that power from on high, that ſo ſtrengthens weak hearts and hands, that the feeble may be as *David*; For ſuch an anointing with freſh Oyl, as may cauſe us to move ſwiftly and ſweetly after Jeſus Chriſt? *Mal.* 3. 3, 4

And we have many precious cords of love let down to pull at, for this gracious Goſpel-promiſe; as the ſpecial promiſe of the Father of mercies, to ſend the Comforter, oft repeated for our better aſſurance; and he is faithful that hath promiſed; he will not deny his people long, nor alwayes, for he cannot deny himſelf. And the effectual prayer of our Lord Jeſus, who never prayes amiſs, but is heard alwayes *Joh.* 14. & 15. 16.

alwayes of his Father; This was that sweeteſt Myrrhe which dropt from the lips of Chriſt, as he was aſcending up to Heaven, his greateſt laſt Teſtament-promiſe of a double portion of his Spirit: Now, is it ſo much upon the Lords heart to beſtow this peculiar bleſſing, and ſhould it not be much upon our heart to ask it; eſpecially being that glorious miniſtration, which is to contiuue, for the ſupport, ſupply and ſolace of the Saints, till the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt, without which no outward adminiſtration can be effectual.

2. Oh Pray, Pray, that *Jehovah would ſet his King upon his holy hill of* Zion, *that the Heathen may be his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth his poſſeſſion:* that *the government may be upon his ſhoulder, who is cloathed with a veſture dipt in blood, and hath on his thigh a Name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; that all things may be opened and ſhut by the Key of* David. *The Lord is ariſing to ſhake terribly the Earth, the*

Pſa. 2. 6, 8.
Iſa. 9. 6.
Rev. 19. 13
& 16. 14.
Iſa. 2. 11, 17.

loftineſs

loftineſs of man muſt be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men made low, that the Lord alone may be exalted in his day. Oh that the Sun of righteouſneſs were at this hight once, there would be a glorious Sun-ſhine day indeed. The God of Heaven and Earth has promiſed, he will *once more ſhake Heaven and Earth,* to bring in that *Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, and the things that ſhall remain*; and Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, rather than one tittle of his good Promiſe ſhall fall to the ground. The Father's heart is all upon his beloved Son, in whom his Soul delighteth, to *exalt Him highly, give Him a Name above every Name.* And ſhall not the hearts of his Children go in with him, and work ſtrongly that way? It was for their ſakes he humbled himſelf ſo low, even to *the death of the Croſs.* Oh how ſhould their hearts break with longings, that he may be extolled, and be very high, crowned with Majeſty and Glory? Why then let all the Lords Remembrancers

Heb. 12. 26, 27, 28.

Phil. 2. 9.

Jer. 33. 2.

brancers make mention of this good thing promiſed, (of which he loves to be put in remembrance) before him night and day, that Jeſus Chriſt may take to himſelf his great power and reign. Oh when ſhall the ſounding of the ſeventh Angel be heard, as the great voices in Heaven, all the world
Rev. 11. 15 over, ſaying; *The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* Oh that
Cant. 3. 10 King *Solomon* would ſend his Chariot, that is paved with Love, for the Sons and Daughters of Zion, that they may enter with joy and gladneſs into the Kings Palace; how would their ſpirits revive within them? and they would ſay, It is enough.

3. Improve the Spirit of grace to the utmoſt; for the chaining up the unclean ſpirit. Oh try what power you have with the *Father of Lights*, to ſet his power on work to ſhake the powers of darkneſs. If fervent Prayer, lift up by the hand of faith, bind Gods hand, and put him to ſay, Let

me

me alone ; will it not overcome him, to bind up Satan, and to bruiſe him under the feet of his Saints ſhortly. The Devil is come down with great wrath, becauſe he knoweth he hath but a ſhort time. He followes his Kingdom with greateſt violence towards its period ; hee's hot upon't, throwing with fury his fiery darts round about. The Adder's poyſon is boyling up to the height. This enemy is comming upon us like a flood : Oh 'tis high time to ſet upon the gates of Heaven with an humble and holy violence, knocking day and night, till the holy Spirit come down with prayer, and lift up a Standard againſt him.

The old Serpent has now above five thouſand years experience upon his back ; hee's now maſter indeed of his black Art. Oh what Multiformity and Variety in his methods? what ſubtilty and ſecrecy in his ſnares? how deſtructive and obſtructive are his devices and depths ? Oh when will the Angel come down from Heaven with

that

that great chain, and lay hold on the
Rev. 20. Dragon and bind him? Ah, what a
1,2,3. world of miſchief will he do, if he be
let looſe a while? For now this Prince
of darkneſs transforms himſelf into an
Angel of light, to bring in the greateſt
darkneſs; and the Devil in white, or
the white Devill, is moſt dangerous
and deceitful; now, like the adulterer
mentioned, *Job* 24. 15. he diſguiſeth
himſelf, or ſets his face in ſecret, (ſo
the Original) that he may beguile and
defile us, and we never know it; and
be moſt and beſt at his wicked work,
when leaſt in ſight. He has put on a
vizard of profeſſion, and now playes
the thief in grain, ſtealing away the
the power and heart of pure Religion.
He has oyl in his mouth, and truth in
his tongue; but war and a lie in his
heart. And how many are betrayed
with his flattering kiſſes, killed with
his falſe kindneſſe, and by ſwallowing
down his ſugered, poyſonous pills
greedily? How many are taken with
Rev. 9. the fine hair of the locuſts that aſcend
8,10. out of the bottomleſs pit, who [illegible]

them with their tailes as Scorpions. Oh then if ever you pittied poor ſilly ſouls, laden with ſin, and led captive by Satan; now pitty and pray for them much more: Oh cry out (as the betrothed Damſel, fearing raviſhment) to the Captain of your Salvation, to *lead Captivity Captive*, to reſcue his darlings from the Lions, and to ſhorten this hour of temptation.

4. Oh Pray, Pray, for a glorious ſpiritual reſurrection of the hearts and lives of the Saints, after ſo great a death has paſt upon them; that times of renewing and reviving may come from the preſence of the Lord, to the decaying and deſponding ſpirits of his people; Oh what a bleſſed, beautiful ſight, would ſuch an heavenly Spring be, after this heart-withering Winter-ſeaſon? Would the flowers of the ſpouſes Garden flouriſh once, the Pomegranats bud forth, & the tender Grape ſend forth a good ſmell: then would the ſinging of birds, and the voyce of the Turtle be heard in our land, and we might chearfully get up early to

Cant. 2. 11, 12, *and* 7. 12, 13.

the

the Vineyards. Oh be earneſt with the Father of Spirits to ſend down a ſpecial anointing from on high, for the new ſpiriting of his people for the work of their generation; a common ſpirit will not carry them through ſpecial ſervice; no, it muſt be that other Spirit that *Caleb* had, or they'l never follow the Lord fully; The Sons and Daughters of *Zion* muſt be awaked, to put on beautiful garments, and ſhake themſelves from the duſt, as they that are redeemed from the earth, and from men, as ever they would appear in a good Goſpel-poſture to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth; They muſt be *putting on that new Man, which*, after God, *is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, and be renewed in the Spirit of their minds*, or they'l have no heart, to think of the New Heaven and New Earth, wherein righteouſneſs ſhall dwell. That work which the Lord is carrying on in the world, is high and heavenly, much above the world. A low-ſpirited and earthly-minded Generation can never

reach

reach it, their poor flat ſpirits muſt needs ſhrink from it, or ſink under it, at one time or other. Oh they had need of gracious, excellent ſpirits, changing from Glory to Glory, by the Spirit of Glory reſting on them; who look to keep pace, or hold any conſiderable comfortable correſpondency and compliance with thoſe glorious Works which the Lord will bring forth in the latter dayes, who *is wonderfull in Counſel, and excellent in Working.*

Why then, 5. let us look upon it, as one main work of the day, to ſet Faith on work at the Promiſes by Prayer, for Judges as at the firſt, and Counſellors as at the beginning; Men of choice ſpirits, anſwerable to *Jethro's* choice; able men, fearing God, men of Truth, hating Covetouſneſs. *Exod.* 18. 21. And while I am ſtirring you up to make ſupplications to the Lord our Righteouſneſs, that he would graciouſly vouchſafe a peculiar unction and qualification, to ſuch as are in Authority; let me ſet before your

eyes one of the first and fairest patterns, deserving to be set in letters of Gold, and engraven upon our hearts as with the point of a Diamond; the purest primitive mould of Mercy and Justice, sweetly meeting together in the righteous breast of *Job*, and striving (as it were) for super-eminency and victory: As *for Righteousness, he cloatheth himself with it; and Judgment was to him as a Diadem; He brake the jaws of the Oppressor, and pluckt the spoyl out of his teeth; and delivered the Poor that cryed, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him.* As for Mercy, his condescention and compassion is very remarkable; when he sate Chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, he was as one that comforted the Mourners; *A Father to the Poor and Fatherless; eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame;* who caused the heart of the Widow to sing, and the blessing of such as were ready to perish came upon him. O that Jesus Christ, the blessed and onely Potentate, would make

Job 29. 11, 12.

make all our Governours and Magiſtrates willing in the day of his power; to kiſſe the Son in humble ſubjection and hearty affection to his righteous Scepter; and to lay down both Sword and Scepter at his feet (as the Elders did with their Crowns): Oh that there were in them ſuch an heart; as to ſay with the inhabitants of *Judah*, in their hearts; *The inhabitants of Jeruſalem ſhall be our ſtrength, in the Lord of Hoſts their God.* That they may be as *nurſing Fathers to the* Saints, the Children of the moſt high, yea the leaſt of Chriſts Brethren; accounting it their greateſt glory and praiſe, to promote the glory of the King immortal and eternal, the only wiſe God; *to be a praiſe to thoſe that do well, and a terror to evil doers*, putting ſinners to ſhame. Oh that the *Rock of Iſrael* that ſpake it, would make it good; That they that *rule over men, muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God: And they ſhall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun ariſeth*, even *a morning without clouds*, 2 Sam. 23. 3, 4.

as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the earth, by clear ſhining after rain. Why let us open our hearts and mouthes wide (by the help of the Spirit) for ſuch a bleſſing as this, as they waited for *Job*, even as for the latter rain.

And ſpread thoſe good old Promiſes before the Lord, which are as freſh upon his heart as ever, to renew them in theſe latter dayes; *That Saviours ſhall come upon Mount Zion, to judge the mount of* Eſau, *and the Kingdom ſhall be the Lords*; *That he will raiſe up Carpenters to break the horns, that ſcatter Judah, ſo that no man can lift up his head*; That he will put that honour upon his Saints, *To execute the judgment that is written, with a two-edged ſword in their hands, and the high praiſes of God in their mouth*: *That the Faithful, Choſen, and True, cloathed in fine and white Linen, ſhall give Blood to drink to the Woman, who is drunken with the Blood of the Saints and the Martyrs of Jeſus, and ſhall deſtroy that great City which reigneth ov-*

Obad. v. 21.

Zech. 1. 20, 21.

Pſa. 149. 6, 9.

Rev. 18. 6, 14.

over the Kings of the Earth; and ſhall overcome all his and their enemies in the Blood of the Lamb, for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. Oh then let the Prayers of all the Saints meet upon the Golden Altar, *Rev. 8. 3, 4.* that the ſmoak of the Incenſe may aſcend up before God day and night; and let them cry with a loud voice, ſaying, *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, &c?*

Laſtly; Pray, pray for the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt, upon all pure Evangelical Adminiſtrations; That Jeſus Chriſt would walk *Rev. 1. in the midſt of the Golden Candleſticks*; *13, 16.* hold the Stars in his right-hand, that the Golden Pipes may empty the Gol- *Zech. 4. 11, 12.* den Oyl out of themſelves from the Olive-tree; and his Servants be anointed with the Oyl of Gladneſs, who *Jer. 3. 15.* deſire to keep the Commandments of God, and the Teſtimony of Jeſus. And that he would ſend Paſtours according to his own heart, that may feed the People with knowledge and underſtanding; able Miniſters of the New-

New-Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit; and ſend them forth in the Power and Spirit of *Elijah*, to turn many to the Lord. And that the good Shepheard would call his own Sheep by name, lead them out, and go before them; that they may know his voice, and follow him, and go in and out and find Paſture.

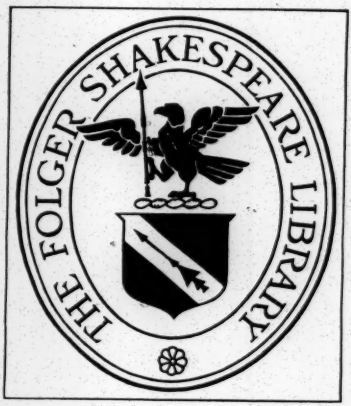
John 10. 3, 4, 9.

That his little Flock receiving the Goſpel not in word only, but alſo in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance; may have that glorious Character of the Church of *Philadelphia*, as a Crown of twelve Stars upon their heads; that they have kept the Word of his Patience, and have not denyed his Name; who will keep them in this hour of Temptation.

1 *Theſſ.* 1. 5.

Rev. 3. 8, 10.

FINIS.

Robert walker his booke

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